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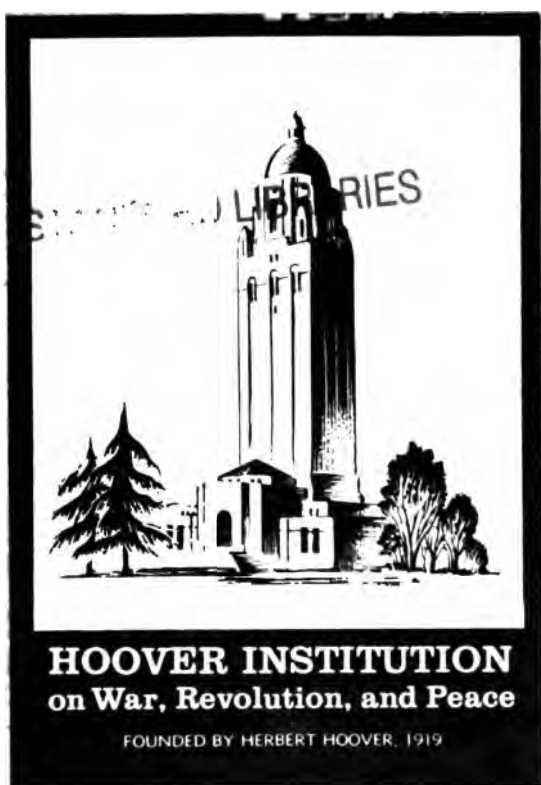
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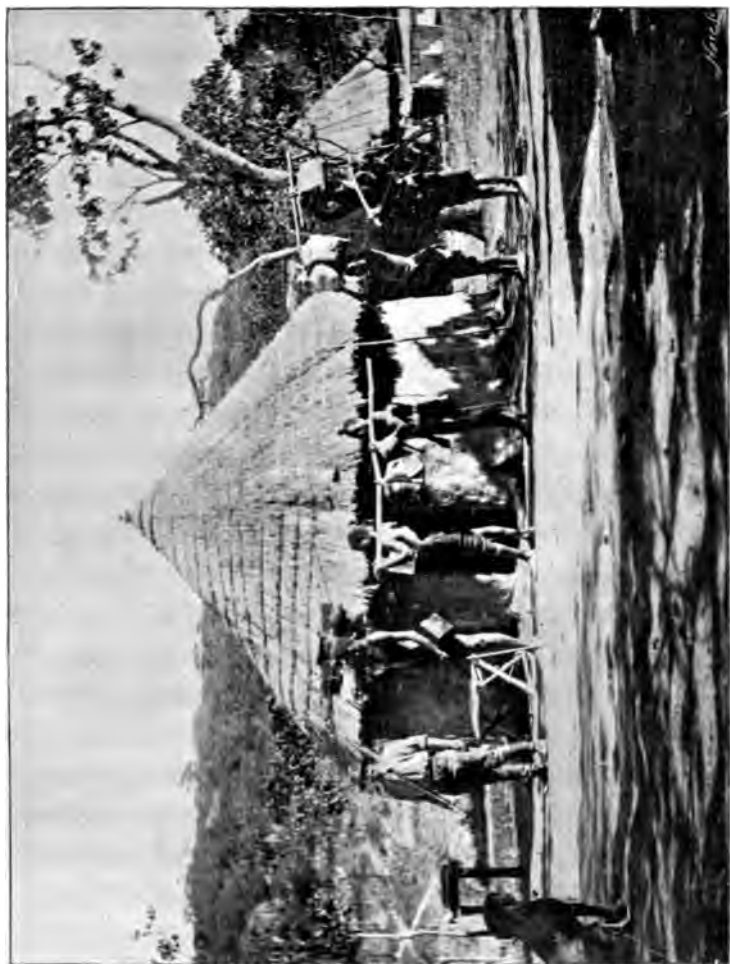
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THE START FOR VICTORIA.

IN NEW SOUTH AFRICA:

*TRAVELS IN
THE TRANSVAAL AND RHODESIA.*

BY
H. LINCOLN TANGYLL.



CAMP LIFE IN MASHONALAND.

WITH TWENTY-SIX ILLUSTRATIONS.

LONDON: HORACE COX,
WINDSOR HOUSE, BREAM'S BUILDINGS, E.C.

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THE END OF THE WORLD



PREFACE.

FROM its earliest known days Africa has provided a field for speculation on the part of the thoughtful, and for adventure on that of the restless.

In these latter days the lifting of the veil which has enshrouded the great Continent does not diminish, but, rather, enhances its interest. The pressing need of extended fields of action for our growing population gives a solid reason for the inborn inquisitiveness which the "Unknown" stimulates in enterprising mankind.

At a time when South Africa is forcing itself upon the consideration of the world, my account of recent travels in the Transvaal and Zambesia (or Rhodesia) may be of interest to those readers who rest at home, and of use to those whose intention it is to dare the fascination which

Africa possesses for all who have once trod her soil.

A difficulty encountered in editing the notes made *en route* has been the sudden changes and succession of events during the process of writing, but it will be seen that fresh light is thrown on the most recent occurrences by many of the descriptions, and that in South Africa the inevitable — and necessary — expansion of “Greater Britain” is being steadily carried forward.

The illustrations are from photographs taken by me with a hand camera.

H. LINCOLN TANGYE.

SMETHWICK HALL.

STAFFORDSHIRE.

August, 1896.

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IN NEW SOUTH AFRICA; TRAVELS IN THE TRANSVAAL AND RHODESIA.

ERRATA.

The alternate page headings from p. 165 to p. 189 *should read* "Eendragt Maakt Magt," instead of "Rambles in Rhodesia."

Page 179, line 13, *for* "Zeeberberg" *read* "Zeederberg."

Page 247, line 11, *for* "crop" *read* "outcrop."

besi, saving that now occupied by Germany, and possibly, though less likely, the more important area on the East coast nominally under the sway of Portugal, will finally pass under the rule of Great Britain more or less directly, and with some generally approved form of independent government.

It is to be borne in mind, as having a vital bearing on the case, that a very considerable proportion of

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the population of Cape Colony is Dutch in origin and Dutch in sympathy, and that, consequently, their influence and interest in our future policy must be regarded when any question affecting the Boer Republics is under consideration. The confidence and support of this section should therefore be cultivated and, if possible, gained, by liberal and sympathetic treatment. To this end the evidences of still existent national sentiment should be dealt with generously and lightly until it becomes merged into the one consolidating desire common to all colonists who feel a pride and satisfaction in the growth and individualising of the character of their country.

That an understanding, or even a thorough combination should take place between the Colonies and the Boer Republics seems desirable from a commercial, as well as from a political, point of view, for, as time goes on and numbers increase, the people inhabiting a restricted interior will become increasingly dependent on the outside world; and, as the desire and necessity for trade increases—as the world's progress will eventually, though slowly, cause it to increase—so will the necessity for co-operation, rather than competition, between these young countries become forcible and apparent.

Whatever the tie in the first instance, it must,

inevitably, be of the loosest description. There is too essential a difference between the temperaments of the two white peoples for any thoroughly intimate alliance to result, primarily, in anything save instant and irredeemable failure. In the Transvaal and the Free State there are men who have established their country by means of their own unaided exertions, and who would, naturally, repudiate any scheme which did not provide that they should have complete autonomy as a province or state; in fact, a thorough scheme of "Home Rule" is the least that it would be possible, or even reasonable, to expect would have any chance of permanent, or even partial, success.

The advantage which will present itself to the Boer in the future, with considerable force, is that when his already circumscribed area is fully occupied, as it will be within measurable time, his surplus population must find a new outlet, and this is only possible—apart from a portion of Gazaland, which is under undesirable Portuguese rule—by emigrating into British territory, where, in course of time, the emigrants or their descendants would become British subjects. At present, Boers are to some extent debarred from finding fresh fields and pastures new in the direction of Rhodesia, the only direction, with a portion of Gazaland, which offers any tempt-

ing inducements ; so that as subjects of the Queen they would possess a tangible advantage, which will in due time command their attention.

It is to be deplored that of late years the Transvaal Government has manifested a tendency to fall into the error which generally besets young communities, namely, that of desiring to create new industries in the country by limiting the introduction of foreign goods, the imposition of excessive import duties being the favourite, and, in the end, fatal means employed. It is the old story over again, even with the example of Victoria, and the acknowledged and considerable share that a blind policy of protection has had in causing the recent deplorable financial and commercial condition of that Colony. A recent arrangement is that subsidised factories for the manufacture of two articles of commerce shall be established, and heavy taxes put on the corresponding imports from abroad, one of which is indispensable to the chief industry of South Africa, gold-mining, on the well-being of which, indeed, depends the future of the Transvaal. The result of the proposal to put a prohibitive import duty on dynamite—and it is said that even under present conditions every ton of ore raised necessitates the expenditure of sixpence in this explosive—was felt immediately, and, although in the end the firm action of the Chamber

of Mines resulted in a reduction rather than an increase of the price of this article, the policy indicated by the attitude of the Government cannot fail, if persisted in, to deal a heavy blow at the country's prosperity.

Not only is this so, but, to a certain extent, the Transvaal, which is already far more dependent on the outside world than it used to be, is largely in the hands of its neighbours, through whose ports its supplies and its gold exports must pass, and hence it runs the double danger, in pursuing this policy, of prejudicing its development, and at the same time inviting reprisals.

The second point on which a radical difference exists, and will continue to exist to a greater or less extent, is the treatment of what is called the "native question." Without doubt, the difficulty of providing for the future of the native races, and defining their relations with the white man, is one of considerable magnitude; but the ultimate idea of the British does not consist necessarily in the dispossession of the aboriginal owners and their reduction to servitude, as is the policy of the Boers, the example of Natal being a living witness to this assertion. A factor which renders this less important, it may be said in qualification, is that there are few new districts, always excepting Swaziland, where the peculiar

views of our friends can prove a source of trouble, under present conditions.

The method of dealing with the native population in a country where they are nominally in the ascendant, it must be confessed constitutes a delicate problem; and the late situation in Mashonaland presented the difficulties in a marked and perplexing form. We were then confronted with the facts that over a large tract of territory, wherein a comparatively small number of our countrymen were present only by the permission of a savage and absolute monarch—while the country practically, though perhaps not formally, constituted part and parcel of our empire—acts were constantly occurring which our sentiments of humanity made us condemn and resolve not to permit. A strong and unmanageable section of the tyrant's people, ignorant of the strength and resources at the back of the few Europeans whom they saw, defied the demand to discontinue the wholesale murder. While none could be willing that ignorance should bring down dire misfortune on the Matabele nation, it was impossible for this ignorance to be permitted to result in either the extermination of a peaceable and industrious people, or the loss of our brave and enterprising pioneers. War therefore was inevitable.

In the early stages of the crisis there appeared to be some difference of opinion as to the responsibility of the Government, but it were useless for any government to practically repudiate responsibility in such a case, in face of the dangers which had arisen, and the section of the Charter of the British South Africa Company which provides that any difference between the Company and a native chief shall be submitted to the Secretary of State, if required, throws the responsibility of dealing with such a matter in the first instance, and mainly, on to the Government. The British South Africa Company is doubtless a powerful organisation, directed by sagacious men; but the defence of a country, virtually an integral part of Her Majesty's dominions, is surely an Imperial duty rather than the mere private concern of a limited company. It is not even a Uganda which is involved, but an increasingly important and inviting country, within easy reach of Cape Town, which presents the strongest inducements to the investment of capital and the emigration of colonists. For these reasons it is well that, though somewhat tardily, Imperial countenance and aid was to some extent given to the Company in the settlement of the Matabele troubles; and, without a doubt, the lessons we have learned in grappling with similar difficulties in New Zealand, and on previous

occasions in Africa, have, with one sad exception, been taken to heart both by those at home and—almost unnecessary to say—by those on the spot, being profitably employed in averting a recurrence of disasters caused by too late an appreciation of the danger, or too light an estimation of the foe. One peculiar source of gratification was the active and personal help of our loyal and true friend, Khama, who, in his territory west and south-west of Matabeleland, as a dusky chief with a white man's heart, has shown, in his rule over the Bamangwatos, a brilliant example of wisdom and uprightness to rulers and people of all nations, be they coloured or white.

In some previous cases of trouble with natives, an interesting course of events has occurred indicating a certain lack of prescience on the part of the Home Government, and an apparent slowness to perceive the seriousness of the outlook at the inception of warlike complications. But too severe a sentence must be passed on no Government in this respect, even by those who, being on the spot, think they see obviously the right and only course before them, and feel themselves hampered by the restrictions from England; it must be remembered that with Imperial sanction comes Imperial responsibility, and a view which may be justified by the consideration of the

local question only, may be completely untenable when it is regarded from a more comprehensive and national standpoint. Naturally and properly the Home Government feels it a duty to exercise somewhat of a restraining influence when the members of a young State, living constantly amongst possibilities of complications and always feeling the necessity for ready self-defence, takes up a position which promises warfare ; but the very state of mind which this continual attitude of negation on the part of the Government involves, renders it difficult for it to quickly grasp the necessity which sometimes arises for prompt and vigorous action.

The same course of events brings incidentally into prominence that mixture of pluck, obstinacy, and contempt for the foe which characterises the British soldier, and which, though a quality which has on many an occasion carried him past obstacles which would have otherwise appeared insurmountable, has at times led to appalling disasters.

Let us shortly trace the history of such a typical course of events. On a *casus belli* occurring the first act may possibly end in an overpowering army destroying or scattering the little force of British settlers which only would be readily available for defensive purposes. On one or two events of this description taking place the Government may, to

some extent, awake to a sense of its responsibility and go so far as to despatch a force, proving on trial to be insufficient or unfitted to grapple effectively with the enemy. This force is promptly subjected to defeat, or gains an equivocal and scarcely more desirable victory, the usual mistake being made of under-estimating the value of such foes or of employing raw forces, unaccustomed to the peculiar conditions of warfare against a savage people and in such a country. On this taking place public attention is drawn more completely to the case, and there arises a cry that British "prestige" is suffering and requires, in vindication, that a thorough and decisive lesson shall be given to the natives. Finally a sufficient and properly constituted force is sent out, and administers a crushing lesson to the offenders, which might have been done at first with half the expenditure of blood and treasure and with far greater effect.

It may safely be said that as a native cannot well appreciate a power of which he has not been made practically aware, and that as a general rule the only argument which he recognises as satisfactory and finally convincing is "brute force," whenever he becomes actively demonstrative of his contempt for the power he knows not, or for the justness of its rule, he should once and for all, firmly yet fairly, be

made to thoroughly appreciate it by means of an armed force, sufficiently strong to render an engagement a well assured victory. It is surely wiser and kinder, to say nothing as to cost, for any mistaken ideas to be dispelled promptly whenever there are signs that they will lead to trouble, than to let their results develop until they become dangerous and maybe fatal.

The idea held by the humanitarian in England that such a people as the Matabele can, in the early days of deliverance from barbarous and despotic rule, be ruled entirely by loving-kindness or by the slow method of law as at home, and that summary and stern dealing with them, even under the most strained circumstances, is reprehensible, is the idea of one who sleeps thousands of miles away, undisturbed by dreams of assault and murder by fierce and naked savages, and who is forgetful of the fact that cruelty and savagery require in justice the strong, resolute hand. These men, and the methods of ruling them, are not to be judged from a European standpoint ; appeal to right and justice in their case would be pure futility ; a nation of butchers, steeped for generations in the blood of their weaker brethren, their only master is a perception of moral and physical superiority, and where this is the case humanitarian principles, instead of

dictating a milder course, in reality impose the sternest treatment.

The wisdom of this course has been particularly demonstrated in Mashonaland, a country whose reputed richness had been the means of forming strong attractions to English settlers, and the white population of which was endangered by the hostile preparations of the thousands of a war-loving tribe—a tribe which would, in its pristine state of power, have remained a standing menace until it had been taught to realise the superior strength, and to bow to the principles of humanity and justice of its white neighbours. Had a weaker policy been adopted, the position of Europeans would have been imperilled, not here only, but in many another budding colony; the extermination of the industrial tribe would have been effected; the opening up of this vast territory to the uses of civilisation would have received a serious check, and corresponding damage would have been done to the cause of humanity, and to the prospects of South African trade.

It is now a matter of history that in the late (English) summer of 1893, after an act of ferocity more unbearable than usual, when even white men could not prevent their Mashona servants from being pursued and assegaied before their very eyes, a force

of a few hundred settlers was organised to cope with Lobengula's thousands. The two contingents of this little army, at first advancing separately, were supported by a force of Boers under Commandant Raaff, and one composed mainly of members of the Bechuanaland Border Police, marching from different directions, the latter being accompanied by Khama and his following. Although only one engagement of any great importance fell to the lot of the latter forces, there is no doubt that the diversion caused by their approach was of great utility in detaching a large section of the enemy's troops from the main and more formidable portion which opposed the advance of Major Forbes.

Progressing under extraordinary difficulties, and urged forward by the knowledge of the imminence of the rainy season, this gallant and compact little band soon gave evidence of the toughness of its mettle and the excellence of its composition and organisation. Composed almost entirely of novices in the art of war, they were yet strong, seasoned, and experienced men, and the force was veritably an ideal one for accomplishing the end in view. Proving its fitness in the first serious encounter, it withstood the terrible onslaughts of the flower of Lobengula's bloody army, the unconquered Imbezu and Incuba regiments amongst others, knowing full

well that did these sable warriors once get within arm's length, extermination by the keen blade of the assegai infallibly awaited it.

The war, and incidentally the employment of modern arms, such as Maxim guns, gave great offence to a section of the British public, which, with the best of mistaken motives, condemned the "unequal struggle" and the dispossession of the "aboriginal inhabitants" — a strange appellation surely for the sons of Moselekatse's invading murderers. Yet the "unequal struggle" consisted of an encounter between some seven hundred white men and a dozen times that number of savages, against whose numerical superiority the former could not possibly stand in personal hand-to-hand encounter.

The war to some extent exemplified a struggle between the styles of two epochs of warfare, one the hand-to-hand conflict of the early ages, the other the long-range fighting of to-day. Had the swarms of Matabele once attained the ranks of our devoted band, the issue could not long have remained in doubt ; and it is to be remembered in connection with this fact that the path lay at one time through thick bush, and that every night gave the opportunity for an overwhelming attack in midnight darkness (this actually happening at the fierce battle of Shangani),

when modern arms and Maxims would be enormously handicapped. The "inequality" of the struggle is not, therefore, apparent.

Of the incidents of the campaign much might be written, but it will suffice here to place on record the astonishment of the surviving natives on the bursting of a shell, guns in profusion being fired in its direction under the mistaken impression that the white man was in some way emerging and firing from the ground ; then, again, the interpretation of the rockets fired at night as a guide to a belated skirmishing party, as "the white man talking to his gods."

The one sad blot on the successful history of the campaign is the mournful fate of Major Wilson, Captain Borrow, and their thirty-five men. Brilliant as are the records of British gallantry, in few instances, if any, has the heroism of young Captain Borrow in his attempted rescue of Major Wilson been equalled, and nowhere can we find a more inspiring spectacle than that of these devoted comrades fighting bravely shoulder to shoulder, facing a certain death, and, though escape to a portion was possible, disdaining life gained by the desertion of their fellows.

The war was conducted in a masterly and decisive manner ; the despotism of Lobengula's bloodthirsty

legions was broken, and the "dispossessed" Matabele and the liberated Mashonas settled down once more on their lands to engage in the arts and occupations of a happy peace.*

This is not the place to discuss the wisdom or otherwise of the policy pursued by successive Governments of granting Imperial power to companies of individuals; the risks and responsibilities undertaken are incalculable, and experience has proved that the powers and privileges granted may be abused; it cannot be said, however, that, with the exception of a few isolated instances on the part of individuals, the most recent example has done otherwise than acted fairly, and shown tolerance in the exercise of its governing powers; and while—the company having been established for purposes of trade—it would be absurd to say that its mission is a philanthropic one, or that its actions are guided simply by principles of humanity, it is obvious that it is to the interest of the British South Africa Company that trade and fair dealing should go hand in hand, and all the evidences tend to prove that, broadly speaking, its affairs are conducted on well understood and wise principles, which cannot but be productive of general and lasting benefit. It must

* Broken temporarily by the revolt of 1896.

be remembered that the pioneers of civilisation in all parts of the globe, whether it be Franklin or Nansen in the frozen Arctic, or Park, Livingstone, or Stanley in unknown Africa, have been engaged in seeking after undiscovered facts, or in endeavouring to find new outlets for commerce ; the result has been the same, civilisation has more or less followed, and similarly the work of the British South Africa Company, though primarily undertaken for pecuniary purposes, is none the less valuable as aiding in the advancement of civilising and educational influences.

If we call to mind the history of the East India Company, one of brilliant and undying glory, as well as, at periods, of grinding oppression and inordinate rapacity, it is well to take cognisance of the fact that under no circumstances can the latter be repeated in South Africa without receiving an instant and well merited chastisement, the knowledge of which on the part of the company should be a sufficient guarantee that nothing of this character should occur. The conditions, too, are essentially different, for in the days of Clive, India was many months' travel from England ; it was a *terra incognita* to the greater part of the English people, to whom came echoes, as almost from another world, of the great and soul-stirring deeds which heroes were

accomplishing there. Small wonder, then, that, under the shelter of the great company's power and name, and in the obscurity which distance and the slowness and incompleteness with which news travelled out of the vast empire of the Moguls, acts of plunder and oppression occurred, and the honourable name for justness and honesty of rule which was the boast of England was bespattered and soiled. Nought of this kind can well happen nowadays without immediate discovery; steam, the telegraph, the overspreading of the world by European races, the power of the press with its elaborate intelligence system, have rendered such events almost impossible; for nowadays the fierce light of publicity beats on every quarter of the globe where Europeans make their way, and public criticism, born of a fuller knowledge, forms a most valuable guiding and restraining influence.*

* Since the above lines were penned, an armed section of the forces of the British South Africa Company entered the Transvaal, advancing from Mafeking on Johannesburg. The promptness with which this movement became known to the British Government, causing steps to be taken to compel their return, is a remarkable confirmation of the opinion expressed above as to the impossibility of proceedings distasteful to the Home Government being successfully carried through, though it must be admitted that before the Government had time to apply its hand after its voice had failed, the Boers had settled the matter in their own fashion.

The British South Africa Company is in a totally different position from that of the East India Company; with the single exception of the Matabele war, its struggles are commercial rather than military. Its range of operations is limited in a way that did not apply to the older company, and, instead of having the vigorous offshoots of our powerful rivals in Europe to contend with and fight to the bitter end, and the countless numbers of the descendant race of a great and ancient civilisation—nations powerful, warlike, and masters in cunning, duplicity, and dissimulation—to encounter, they have simply to deal with comparatively small numbers of savage tribesmen infinitely lower in the human scale than the majority of those whom the early founders of the East India Company had to face and subjugate. Still, once established, the wealth only waiting to be gathered flowed into the coffers of the latter company, and its way was easy so far as commerce was concerned; whereas, despite the great natural resources doubtless existent in Rhodesia, in their development will lie the greatest problem for the British South Africa Company to solve. Apart from this, the latter company has always to reckon with the possible interference of a Government which holds an infinitely stronger hand over it than the East India Company ever felt, and always has

to take into consideration as part of the inherent possibilities of the future, the assumption by the Imperial power of the reins of government with which it has been invested. This factor in the company's existence must be fully borne in mind in judging it, for without doubt it undertook a risky and responsible task, which apparently the Government itself was not willing to assume ; the most difficult of the problems and the most arduous of the work have been negotiated by the company, and, on the Government stepping in, it would reap much of the fruit for which the company with its money and enterprise has sown the seed.

While it is but rational and just that in the making of treaties or of war the Government should claim paramount authority, the Chartered Company's plea for a right of rule, free and independent within the bounds of reason, should be upheld.

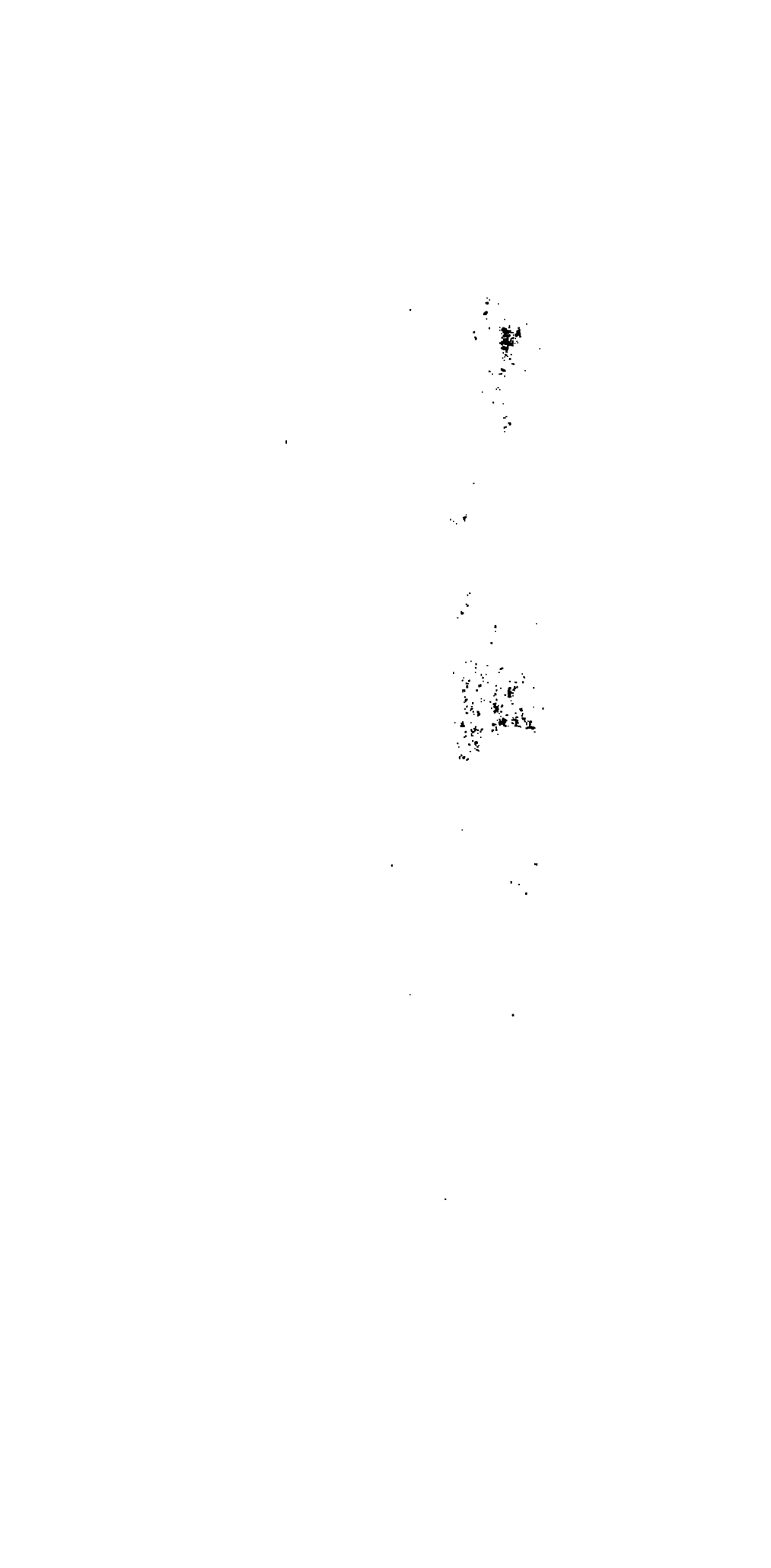
These thoughts have been suggested by several visits to the " Land of Gold," and are exemplified in the following notes, which were made on the spot with a view to refresh the writer's memory in after years rather than for publication. It might with some reason be deemed presumption for a mere visitor to pronounce very definitely on the problems to be solved in the immediate future, for the fuller knowledge which such an expression of views should

imply is only to be gained by a long and intimate personal acquaintance with the conditions which obtain at the present moment, coupled with a thorough familiarity with those of the past ; it is hoped, however, that, as the result of personal and unbiassed observation, the notes will not be without interest at a time when South Africa is attracting universal attention, and that any authentic description, however slight, illustrative of the character of the country and the conditions of life there may be welcome.

H. L. T.

BIRMINGHAM.





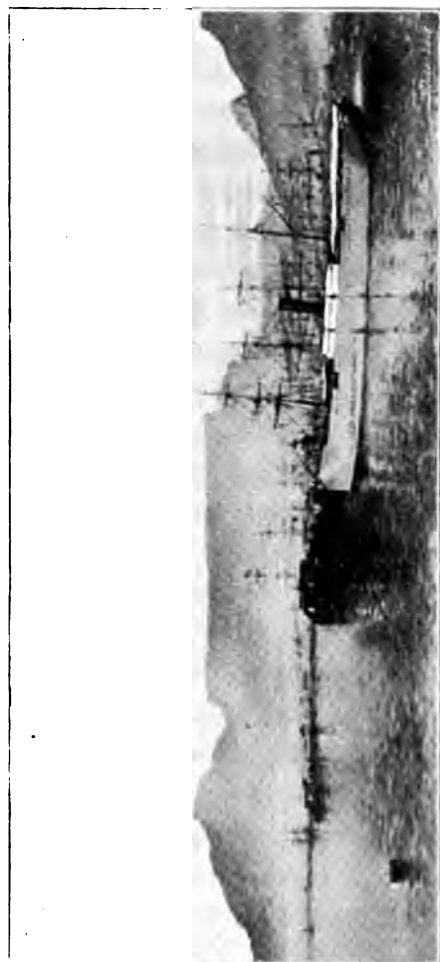


PART I.

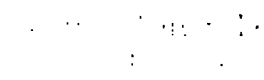
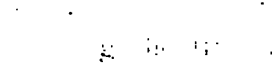
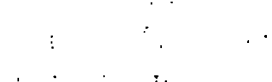
CHAPTER I.

THE LAND OF GOLD AND THE WAY
THERE.

SOUTH AFRICA, varied and chequered though its history has been, until an almost recent date has excited comparatively little interest on the part of the average European, whose knowledge and ideas of the vast areas now represented by this name have been somewhat of a rudimentary and fallacious character. To-day it may be said there are few parts of the world which so strongly command attention. What California was in the "fifties," what Australia yet may claim to be, that is South Africa at the present moment; a brilliant fact, with a hopeful future of almost unlimited possibilities. Centuries passed over the head of what now mainly consists of the youngest of England's colonies; the turmoil and ceaseless strife, hardly heard of in far off Europe, too busy in solving her own problems, proving the travail of at least one nation's birth.



THE GOLDEN GATE OF SOUTH AFRICA, CAPE TOWN.



glance at the present financial, commercial, and social state of the country we are about to visit.

To begin with its people ; it is somewhat difficult to compare the present population of British South Africa with that of, say, 1874, as so many new countries have been opened up which were partially inhabited by Europeans before any census was taken, or before they became enrolled as part of the British dominions. It is therefore probably the only safe course open, for purposes of comparison, to take into consideration Cape Colony alone, as we are able to deduct the present ascertained population of its new provinces from the 1891 totals.*

To take Cape Colony alone then : since 1874 its white population has increased from 236,783 to 376,812 in 1891 (the date of the last census), and this notwithstanding the enormous attraction of the Rand goldfields and Kimberley.

The present white population of the whole of British South Africa (Mashonaland and Zululand excepted), based on the 1891 census, is probably about 674,775, whilst the coloured population amounts to 2,658,359 more ; this shows a decided

* For these figures the author is indebted to the *Argus Annual*, published at Cape Town.

increase of the white element, though by no means an extraordinary one; it must be remembered, however, that so far as the Colony is concerned, it is not caused by a rush for gold but by a legitimate, well grounded development of the general resources of the country.

The revenue of British South Africa has increased very greatly during the fourteen years 1881-1894, and the following figures are of interest. The Colony with, in 1881, a surplus of £250,051, had in 1894 one of £343,868; her revenue in the two years being respectively £3,009,970 and £5,321,352, and the corresponding expenditures £2,759,919 and £4,977,484. In the meantime her debt had risen from £13,261,709 to £27,675,178.

Natal, too, shows the same remarkable development, her revenues for the years ending June, 1881, and June, 1895, being £518,924 and £1,169,780, but the surplus of £44,988 has dropped to £21,687, the expenditures amounting to £473,926 and £1,148,093. Her debt reaches £8,060,354—a respectable amount for a country numbering only about 45,000 white people. In 1891 her deficit amounted to £968,380, mainly representing expenditure on railways and on works under loan funds.

In 1873, when the railways became Government property, the total length in Cape Colony was only

1895 no less than 5,384,129 gallons of wine and 1,725,256 gallons of brandy and other spirits were produced.

The export of ostrich feathers, too, has assumed large proportions, though the amount produced is fifty per cent. more than that of 1884 (realising but half the amount); it is much less than the immense result of 1886, when feathers for some time previous had commanded a high price and had encouraged many to enter the trade, with the result that with a change in capricious fashion, or through over-production, their value fell. An illustration of the fluctuation in prices obtained is given by the fact that while in 1882, 253,954lb. fetched £1,093,989, in 1888, 259,967lb. fetched only £347,792. The yield in 1894 amounted to 350,404lb., value £477,414.

Perhaps the greatest staple export is that of wool, which is produced extensively all over the Colony. An idea of the expansion of this trade is obtained on learning that the export doubled between 1877 and 1892, reaching 75,520,701lbs.; unfortunately its value has decreased in inverse ratio, Australia competing heavily, and gaining the market by the greater care taken in sorting.

The trouble caused by the disease known as "scab," which was successfully grappled with in Australia, has, owing to the conservative opposition

of a section of the farmers, caused a diminution in the yield.

The diamond discoveries have inevitably given a unique interest to the trade of South Africa, the first stone, having been found near the Orange River by a Bushman boy, yielded £500 to the two men who knew sufficient to appreciate its value, and buy it for a small sum from the Boer into whose hands it had drifted. Since that discovery the main centre of the diamond fields drifted from the Banks of the Vaal River at Barkley West to the diamond bearing rocks of Kimberley, and the output of stones in 1870, only £153,460 in value, became in 1887 no less than £4,251,070, and in 1894 fell again to £3,350,635. It is brought home to us that wonders have not yet ceased to happen in these regions, when we read that within a year or two an enormous diamond, measuring three inches in height by two in width and one and a quarter across, was found in the Jagersfontein Mine, and it is probable that, as it stood, it could claim to be the largest diamond existing.

The production of copper by the mines of Namaqualand, south of the mouth of the Orange River, has at times attained a very considerable quantity; the fact of its existence in this locality is ancient history in "New" Africa, and it has been

more or less worked for forty years. Taken altogether the rate of production since 1864 shows a steady increase, putting aside the years during which the "Copper Ring" conducted its operations, when the African production increased fully fifty per cent. It is worthy of notice that while in 1864, 4,323 tons were worth £102,602, in 1891, 23,691 tons were worth only £254,184.

The coal deposits of Cape Colony form the southern extremity of an extensive field, ranging from near Molteno in the colony, through the west of the Free State, and through inland Natal to Middleburgh in the Transvaal, and to the borders of Swaziland. It is but little worked in the colony, but the fortunate proximity of the goldfields in the Transvaal has led to much greater development, the output in 1894 being 679,337 tons, and in Natal there are several mines worked more or less profitably, the output here being in 1891 over 87,000 tons. The coal in many districts, it is important to state, is, in many cases, of poor quality compared with home, some having a calorific value only about equal to that of wood. Natal is more fortunate in this respect, the coal almost rivalling that of Yorkshire.

The most important product of the country, unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately—depending on the point of view from which it is looked at—

leaves Cape Colony almost entirely neglected, for, although gold exists in many districts, it is only at Knysna that it has been found to exist in anything like paying quantities, and these, indeed, are insignificant when compared with the riches discovered far north. It is also said to exist in an almost unapproachable part of Namaqualand in apparently paying quantities.

Since the discovery of gold at Lydenburg and the Murchison range in 1869 and 1870, discoveries have followed in quick succession, just in time to save the Transvaal from bankruptcy. Barberton is yet a goose with golden eggs, though since 1886, when the Witwatersrand became known to the world as a gold field of fabulous extent and richness, interest has declined to some extent. It is unnecessary to enumerate all the districts where the precious metal is now found; suffice it to say that north, east, and south of this extraordinary land the deposits extend, and increasingly tempt adventurers to test their commercial value.

It is almost an impossibility to ascertain with any exactness what amount of gold has been extracted from South African soil during the last twenty years, as much has been exported through Delagoa Bay and by private individuals; but the returns of that passing through Cape Colony and Natal show that

it amounts to no less a sum than £25,267,481, dating from the beginning of 1871 and ending December, 1894, of which no less than £7,370,058 were contributed during 1894.

At the same time, and this will give some idea of the immensity of the prospect before the country, we will look to the portion of the future output already practically ascertained. This was enormous even before 1893, but before half the year was finished, a discovery was made by boring on the property of the Simmer and Jack Mine, which opens up a prospect almost appalling in its magnitude. After persistent and untiring perseverance, and repeated disappointments, at the depth, hitherto unparalleled on the Rand, of 2,343 feet, the main reef was struck. What this means is well illustrated by the following figures. It is regarded as proved that here lies a fresh body of ore, amounting to no less than 458,000,000 tons, worth at one ounce per ton (a probably fair estimate) the enormous sum of £1,603,000,000. It was calculated at the time that it would take all the then available stamping resources of the Rand, some 2000 stamps in all, no less than 187 years to deal with this. Recent trials of the first body of ore mined from deep levels are said to have given results which do not bear out the above calculation.

This result relates only to one portion of the Rand, about forty miles in length, and even this may become insignificant in the future, for it is to be remembered that this is but a small portion of the enormous gold-producing areas, as yet hardly scratched, which are dotted over this immense expanse of country. While such eventualities are possible, it is hardly to be expected that the less attractive though valuable mineral riches will be exhaustively or even seriously drawn upon, so that the outlook for South Africa is one which is brilliant indeed.

Day by day come reports of the most encouraging nature of the gold discoveries in Rhodesia, showing positively that rich deposits exist over an enormous area, giving promise of an abundant future.

Though now but about a fortnight's journey from the old country, that fortnight may seem lives, nor is it to be wondered at therefore that the same old scene which repeats itself at every vessel's departure, occurs once more at Southampton in December, 189—, as the noble s.s. *Scot* leaves the wharf and Old England. Handkerchiefs and hats wave in the breeze, and the youth on our left cries broken farewells to the mother who was lying under

the sod when he reached Africa. The scramble of getting on board, of searching for baggage amongst the multitudinous and odd collection of every kind of trunk, portmanteau, or box, piled up on the gangway, is fatiguing, but when once the huge white vessel, with her two great cream-coloured funnels and graceful bows, is moving down Southampton Water, and W. H. Smith and Son's newspaper boys are packing their papers ready to go ashore with the mail boat, for which we wait some distance farther on, the fresh sea air invigorates and refreshes the passengers. There stands Netley Hospital, extending its great wings along the shore, there lies peacefully the steam yacht from which Lord and Lady — join us. The evening quietness as we glide down the darkness of the Solent, with the flashing light of the Needles Lighthouse in our eyes, and the long, sombre, sinister shore stretching on either side, but half distinguishable, is only disturbed by the swish of the passing waves, the occasional harsh orders of the pilot aloft in the gloom, and the hum of many voices below. This was the last of Old England, and in its default, after a tiring day, the narrow bunk in our spacious cabin possessed an irresistible fascination. Then, perhaps, to a novice, comes the time of greatest contrast with life ashore. Instead of space there are four

narrow bunks in one cabin ; instead of motionless calm there is a never ceasing wave movement ; instead of dead quietness there is the swirl of the water only a few inches from the head, and the regular, penetrating yet subdued, thud, thud of the engines, to which one becomes so accustomed that not only is it unnoticed, but sleep is disturbed if, by the stoppage of the engines, it is absent.

Lord Randolph Churchill complained of the *cuisine* of one of the great South African steamships when he took his memorable journey, but on board ship there is always a class of people who find the monotony of the voyage too much for their superabundance of mental energy, and perhaps, naturally following the lines of Isaac Watts's inspiration, "Satan finds, &c.," their attention is turned to discovering faults and defects which need these voyagers' genius to disclose and denounce. As a matter of fact, it is the writer's experience that while some things may not always be perfect, the food as a rule is excellent. It was noticeable, however, that the *cuisine* on board the *Scot* possessed but meagre attraction for the majority of her passengers during the early part of her voyage. It is needless to enter into details other than that the sad, hollow cheeked, consumptive individuals of the Bay of Biscay, sprawling about in deck

chairs or on saloon sofas, marvellously recovered their vigour before the balmy atmosphere of Madeira was reached, and in truth by the time Christmas had come, their overflowing health and buoyant energies were painfully apparent.

One cannot help being impressed by the rapidity with which the temperature changes as we steam southward at the rate of twenty miles an hour; the morning after our embarkment was perceptibly milder, and, but the second day from England, left in frost and snow, we were pacing the 200 feet of promenade decks without the slightest need of overcoats. A wish that England were only two days further south may perhaps be forgiven one.

That Madeira should be reached at night is disappointing, an excursion into a strange town all asleep and without a moon, offering no very tempting inducement. As soon as the anchor was dropped, the vessel was surrounded by phantoms of small boats tossing about in the black invisible something we knew to be sea, and manned by lithe figures in white, active and agitated. Two minutes later, climbing catlike up out of black space, anywhere over the vessel's side, came tumbling numbers of swarthy, lightly-clad Portuguese, who secured positions on the deck, and then hauled up a most strange medley of wares after them, the whole being

accompanied by a bustling, yelling, pushing and crush, better heard of than experienced. Three of us determined to go ashore despite the darkness and the hour, so that we missed the agony of the coaling operations, and the intermittent din of the donkey engine, during the six hours' stay, and the possibility—a probability at Lisbon—of being rowed half way to the ship on the way back, and then submitted to the pleasing experience of being informed that you will not reach the ship unless you “shell out!”

It was the strangest feeling as we stepped down the brilliant gangway over the ship's side amongst these dark, wildly gesticulating gentlemen, and entered the most foreign-looking craft that can be imagined, then pushed and crowded our way in the dark waters, with many a yell and curse on the part of the boatmen directed against the occupants of the ghostly shapes continually crossing our path, showing for an instant that they were boats, then becoming invisible again, lost in the darkness. Our ship looked strangely weird as we left her, none of her shape being distinguishable against the black sky, and her electric lamps making her seem simply an agglomeration of irregularly distributed brilliancies. The town in front of us, from the water's edge to far up the looming hill behind, was

a mass of twinkling lights, faintly repeated in the shimmering uncertainty of the moving water, full, at our bows and in our wake, of sparkling phosphorescence. There being no pier or landing stage, the prospect of landing from these frail boats through the surf on to the steep and stony beach in such thick darkness was sufficiently lively, but directly we touched the shore in the midst of the breakers, the boat was seized by well accustomed hands and dragged somewhat farther up; the opportunity comes as a wave recedes, a jump is made, and the visitor makes his first acquaintance with this volcanic island at a scrambling run, ignominiously chased by the wave following rattling over the loose shingle. Then do we find pandemonium let loose; safe and dry on shore we discover ourselves the centre of a crowd all talking *en haute voix*, and each individual doing his energetic best to persuade us to take his particular bullock sledge (the peculiar conveyance of Madeira). Beggars too, galore. Being the first to arrive on shore, we are in the position of three unhappy flies besieged by a legion of spiders.

Choosing our vehicle, we enter; it possesses no wheels, having in their places runners which slide smoothly enough over the kidney stones set on edge with which the streets are paved. Our

steeds are bullocks, well adapted for a place where there is but a single road with the slightest pretension to being level. The town looks indeed asleep as we pass along the deserted streets and take a glimpse into the darkness of the small, narrow, mysterious-looking alleys, crooked and winding, which we have neither the time nor the inclination to penetrate at that hour. On either side are buildings—southern indeed in character, picturesquely irregular, all white, some low roofed and narrow, others many-angled and reaching apparently high into the moonless sky; all with hardly an exception have windows closed and strongly shuttered, and massive doors firmly barred, absurdly creating the impression that revolution or riot might at any time be possible in this peaceful island, and should always be guarded against.

Sleeping we found Funchal, sleeping we left it. On our floating home the innumerable human ants, black and active, were yet delving and digging the coal out of the huge lighters which had been towed brimful alongside ere we had left the ship. Still they slaved, grimy, goblinlike and shrill-voiced, one or another occasionally dropping exhausted, perilously near the seething, rushing water. Below we found the senior member of our party calmly sleeping the sleep of the just, while the ship's

donkey engine made night hideous by its intermittent racket a few feet over his head. The new moon now shed her insufficient light on the scene, and a strange sight to be seen by its aid was that of the leaky cockleshells of boats, manned each by a tiny copper-coloured lad or two in simple coverings of white cotton. Their white, lithe figures, active as cats, gleamed against the dark background in the rays of the electric light; even in the darkness they shouted for silver "bits" to be thrown into the water, and in spite of the strong tide running, in they jumped, and before the coin sank six feet deep had recovered it. They swim like fish; indeed one man who attempted to cheat was unceremoniously pitched overboard, this trifling incident merely causing him to chaff the quartermaster, as he laughingly climbed into a boat.

At eight o'clock next morning, four hours after witnessing this scene, we came on deck to find the ship had long weighed anchor and was even out of sight of land, the most noticeable feature being an extraordinary eruption of Madeira chairs.

One of the peculiarities of the *Scot* is that regularly on both the outward and homeward trip she sights all land at night, naturally a source of much disappointment to passengers. The Peak of Tenerife, therefore, was only just to be found, as we

passed the Canary Islands the next night, by those whose eyes were of the sharpest, and Cape Verd, much farther south, was only to be distinguished by its two lighthouses, though we passed near and signalled our name with Roman candles. Cape Verd is in the French colony of Senegambia; the principal commercial town, Dakar, on the peninsula of Cape Verd, being inhabited by about 1200 negroes and 400 French. The weather is now becoming thoroughly warm, and to take a glimpse down the deck is to obtain a lesson in luxury and laziness. The rays from the broiling sun are screened from the promenade deck by long stretches of awning; forms are extended everywhere on the Madeira chairs, and the general atmosphere is one of listless anxiety not to be troubled to think or talk, much less to move, save to periodically absorb a cooling drink. There are one or two exceptions, however, to this state of torpor, who by their restless energy, undeterred by heat or motion, pursue their interminable, exasperating walks up and down the deck, drawing upon themselves the languid execrations of those who find even the thought of exercise revolting in such heat, the sight of it alone constituting in itself an implied reproach. People now begin to talk of sleeping on deck at night, though this is discouraged, as it is

held that with an offshore wind there is danger of fever being borne from the low malarial coast line. Beyond this coast line stretches "Darkest Africa," that unsolved problem, with its teeming millions and all the romance of its dark mysteries. For the realisation of a great future it possesses enormous potentialities and wealth, and while its past is obscure and hazy, it yet contains a record of grand achievements and of heart-breaking tragedies, the whole ennobled by the heroism of those who have spent and lost lives of self-abnegation and privation in the task of opening this vast continent to the light of civilisation.

From this coast, and stretching south and east the length of the Guinea Coast, Ashanti, Dahomey, Benin, and the Niger Delta, the Cameroons and many other places, the millions of slaves were exported whose descendants now form the great black nation in America. Between 1680 and 1780 over a million were transported by English vessels alone, while as many as two millions and more were conveyed by those of other nations. The effect which civilisation had upon them, one to be regretted though hardly to be marvelled at as it manifested itself to them in the shape of slavery, appeared at one time to indicate that after a prolonged experience of the methods of civilised government,

but little idea of it was impressed upon them, collectively speaking, and when the children and grandchildren of the original slaves were transplanted to the old soil, and the two provinces of Liberia and Maryland formed, their tendency appeared to be to degenerate into enervated and demoralised replicas of the barbarians, their ancestors. Happily this tendency cannot be said to have confirmed itself in recent years. The experiment, from which much was expected, though not fulfilling the Utopian anticipations of its promoters, can by no means be said to have proved a failure. We cross the line, a prosaic proceeding nowadays, and in 6° south latitude are level with one of Africa's greatest rivers, the mighty Congo, penetrating the continent to the heart, permitting of the establishment of a European state at its centre, and, with the Zambesi, almost forming a great though interrupted waterway from the west coast to the east.

To return to our vessel. The fourteen days of the voyage pass sufficiently quickly, and life on board ship is too well known in these days for any description to possess special interest. The ordinary events occur, the excitement over the first flying fish seen dies and exists not as we proceed and see them in thousands, while the huge ungainly

whale and rolling porpoises in their speed put our 12,000 horse power to shame.

A strange scene is to be witnessed at night, one of those of peculiar and distinctive character, with something of the weird in them, which vividly impress the mind and remain clear recollections when most else has vanished. The deck quarters of the third-class passengers are shared by the seamen and stokers. The quarters are low and roomy, situated on the main deck, with the first-class promenade deck overlooking them from forward, and the second-class from aft, both being almost level with the enormous awning, sloping roof-like over it. It is crowded with a motley assembly of people, who are as varied in their occupations. We see strange groupings in the dim yellow light and black shadows—there are exhausted firemen lying motionless wherever they can get a trifling draught of air, stretched on the hard hatch gratings in an abandon of ease and in every conceivable attitude; they heed not the sailor singing the latest music hall ditty to an uproariously approving group of men, women and children, any more than does the woman seated by the dim but heavy shape of the steam winch tending her baby; so peaceful is she, that seeing her one would not dream that at her right, left, and all around her,

was a mixed medley of sights, sounds, and of strange humanity, which to her apparently is as non-existent as a phantasy. And all around is the dim sea, rushing, rising, falling, in dark vague contrast.

To return to the brilliant light of the saloon deck, a villainous band, veritably a "scratch" one so far as the fiddles are concerned, is engaged in a melancholy fashion in extracting Terpsichorean exertions from a variegated crowd of perspiring individuals in fancy dress, Ally Sloper being, perhaps, the warmest about the head, and the Highlander the coolest about the legs, the improvised tartan kilt occasionally failing its wearer. Then on another evening there is the mock trial, when the skipper exerts his oratorical and judicial powers, his favourite exclamation being "Great Scot!" the languid lord for once forsakes his scarf knitting (can this be the usual mental relaxation of our hereditary legislators?), our brilliant advocate proves truth to be a mass of irreconcilable contradictions, the "usher" is better described as the "husher," and the jury finally retires to discuss not the verdict so much as "Moët and Chandon."

The voyage is drawing to a close as Christmas approaches; even yet the sweepstakes on the day's run continue to excite keen interest, the main

feature now being the absence of the plunging American widow, whose reckless behaviour had attracted general attention. Life quickens slightly as we near Cape Town, indeed it becomes almost fast on the occasion of the smoking concert when the ladies invaded the smoke room, and even the highest among them demonstrated the equality of the sexes in the consumption of cigarettes and cocktails, and then retired late to bed. That night was weird with unearthly noises, for yells, anathemas and "langwidge," resounded in muffled tones from cabin to cabin, destroying the rest of decent folks. Morning light discovered some prematurely and unconsciously grey with the flour spread over their pillows; others indignant, amused, or silent on the score of finding a prickly reception accorded their limbs and cheeks by the holly artfully concealed in bed or pillow. This Sunday is all bustle and preparation, even "M—— the Fool," ceases his insanities and buries himself in his trunks. At ten or eleven that night the solitary light of Robben Island, home of lepers, criminals, and madmen, is seen shedding its unhappy light over the waters, a dread warning to mariners and all humanity; forward of the bridge in the cold night air stands an expectant crowd vainly attempting to discover the outline of Table



The Land of Gold and the way there. 49

Mountain, invisible even after the twinkling lights of Cape Town cease to draw nearer, and the clank, clank of the iron cable announces our arrival at the moorings for the night.

CHAPTER II.

ACROSS DESERT AND VELDT.

AWAKENING early we find ourselves already alongside the wharf, our first gaze being directed at crowds of men so veritably black that the coal they carry into our hold has no visible colouring effect on the occasionally large patches of epidermis brought to view. On the other side of the vessel is that most characteristic pile, Table Mountain, its long flat top and sheer precipitous cliffs, ever guarding the peaceful town extended sleeping at its feet, giving it an air of majestic and rugged individuality hardly to be dreamed of; while a delicate mist hangs over the city, gradually rising and melting into nothing as the sun increases in power.

A Malay cab driver, with bronze complexion and expression of Asiatic guile, takes us rapidly through the maze of shipping, and for three miles under a glorious sun we follow the coast line, rounding the shoulder of Signal Hill, passing scores of white verandahed villas covered with luxurious creepers

and brilliant flowers. Under the Lion's Head, that dependent of Table Mountain which adds so greatly to its striking effect, we stay ; and in our temporary residence, long, low-roofed, and startlingly white against the brilliant sky, we make our first acquaintance with South Africa and Seapoint. From the verandah we view a glorious stretch of the Southern Ocean, its heart beats resounding on the white and jagged shore in listless and regular monotony. Separating it from us is a gently sloping garden, picturesquely intersected with regular rows of green shrubs, and an occasional sea-green aloe rearing its long stalk and hairbrush - looking branches ; the scene glows with vivid colour and light, and impresses one with a sense of a state which, however peaceful and calm, is throbbing and pulsating with all the subdued strength of intense existence.

A train carries us again into Cape Town, where many a trace of the old Dutch rule remains, that which causes most grateful remembrance being the grand oak avenue planted by the first Dutch Governor, Van Riebeeck, about 1653. This was originally nearly a mile and a half long, and cannot now be much, if at all, short of a mile. Van Riebeeck could have chosen no surer way of keeping green his memory in this hot climate.

On both sides of this charming resort are public

buildings and private residences ; some from their look might have been transplanted bodily from Delft or Leyden, and, fronting the avenue, now lie surrounded by palms and the varied luxury of sub-tropical vegetation. Lounging round, or taking the afternoon walk, are members of apparently every nationality ; more conspicuous than any are the Malay women with their olive skins. These women's great peculiarity lies in their apparent desire to emulate the effect of the crinoline over almost the whole of their anatomy ; not satisfied with this, they attempt also to outvie the rainbow in the variety, crudeness, and gorgeousness of their coloured silks or cottons.

The Malay population of Cape Colony (not a very popular one), numbers about 11,000 ; they live mainly in or about Cape Town, and were in the first instance brought by the Dutch from their East Indian possessions, taking firm root here, and now constituting with the "Cape Boy" (descendants of Dutch and Kaffir or Hottentot), the bulk of the labouring classes in those kinds of labour where great exertion is not called for ; in the markets they are everywhere, and of the cab drivers, fishermen, laundresses, fruit sellers, most are Malay. Some grow rich, and one sees many families taking their drives in Cape carts with an air of ease

and affluence. They profess Mohammedanism, and, as might be expected of an Eastern people, their great drawback is their unsanitary habits; overcrowding and filth are rampant even among the best of them, and they are the despair of sanitary authorities. They get hold of decent houses, as they pay higher rents, when two or three families crowd into each, and render their neighbourhood insupportable for Europeans. During the frightful small-pox epidemic of 1884, when 3000 persons died in Cape Town alone, the main mortality was amongst them, it being impossible to vaccinate them and to get them to observe the most elementary precautions. So much for an unsavoury subject.

The Cape was already a colony in the time of Cromwell, but it had been discovered and rounded long before, by Diaz in 1486, and Vasco di Gama in 1497, simply being used by the Portuguese in after years as a calling station. The first settlers were a few Dutch farmers sent out by the Dutch East India Company; these, with the French refugees who later joined them, farmed the land and traded with the natives in the immediate vicinity of Cape Town. The absurd and restrictive rule of the Dutch governors interfered greatly with commerce and cultivation, and, forming the

precedent which has proved throughout such a characteristic feature in the development of the new South African nation, they packed up their impedimenta on an ox-waggon, which also for the time constituted their home, and went forth into the wilderness, face to face with every kind of danger, from lurking, relentless foes, from famine or drought. There is something grand in the strength of character and sinew which enabled them to do this, and it is sad that isolation and the lack of any civilising restraint should, more particularly in the Transvaal, have distorted this valuable trait into a hatred of any kind of government, into a stubbornness in their refusal to accept the ameliorating influences of the civilisation from which they had for so long been separated, into a capability for harsh treatment of the natives whom they conquered and enslaved, and into content with an existence almost purely animal in its lack of ambition or incentive to improvement. Such a character is bound, inevitably, to depreciate as time passes, and it is said that the Boers are the only example of a white race which has retrograded in the face of the savage. Living for generations away from any government or any civilisation, in daily conflict with the crafty Hottentots and Kaffirs, when cruelty and torture were resorted to on both sides, and

each man had to trust to his own right hand only in ceaseless sanguinary encounters, these men, skilled in fighting single-handed both savage man and savage nature, became possessed of a sturdy independence, as well as of an intolerable bigotry and self-righteousness which have been seldom equalled. A strange faith is the keynote of their character, and one which has dominated their every act. Believing themselves to be a second edition of the Israelites, and drawing a parallel between their own circumstances and those of the chosen people, they take the Old Testament as their only guide, and openly assert that they are God's elect, and that the Hottentots, Bushmen, and Kaffirs are so many Canaanites, Amalekites, or Amorites, whom it is their right and duty to dispossess and subjugate or destroy; every bloody act committed and every tract of land wrested from the natives, has been said in devout language to be a duty directly imposed upon them and sanctioned by the Divine Being, and for every such deed and incident they will quote a dozen of the more sanguinary passages in the Old Testament. This, as may be imagined, has been made the cover for countless acts of persecution and enslavement, the moral effect of which on the victors can readily be appreciated. At the same time, and we found it in


several instances during the Transvaal War, the simple undoubting faith that God was on their side and would lead them to certain victory was marvellous and beautiful.

Combined with other causes, hatred and defiance of authority have ever made the condition of this people a most difficult problem to deal with in South Africa. They rebelled against Dutch rule in 1795, after having spread over a large portion of what now is Cape Colony, and became recognised as English subjects in 1815. The determination of England to root out slavery, and to punish the dreadful cruelties practised by the Boers on their Hottentot slaves, was the first cause of Boer dissatisfaction with English rule; the mere fact that there existed a government, and also that it made them pay taxes, no doubt proving distasteful to these very free children of the wilds. However this may be, about 1834 the discontent came to a climax, and under the lead of a man named Bezuidenhout, whose brother, with several of his followers, lost his life as a refugee from justice, a rising ensued which terminated in a wholesale "trek" on the part of the Boer farmers in three parties, one of which settled on the tract of land between the Orange River and the Vaal River, whilst another crossed the Vaal, founding the

Transvaal, and the third proceeded to Natal. A comment on the morality of the Boers at this time lies in the fact that there is now settled on a territory once known as "No Man's Land," and now as Griqualand, a nation called Griquas or Baastards, numbering over 120,000 souls, the descendants of the half-caste progeny of the Boers and their Hottentot slaves. The pure-blooded Hottentots are now hardly to be seen, they were exterminated, or driven with that lowest form of humanity, the Bushmen, into the remote wilds, and are almost a race of the past.

To resume the record of our journeyings. Time presses us, and, to make the most of what remains, we determine to take the famous drive to Hout's Bay and round Table Mountain. Our vehicle is an ordinary landau, but to English eyes it is extraordinary in the number of horses harnessed to it, on account of the heavy and long gradients to be traversed; though the road is a magnificent one the whole way, four horses are deemed necessary, forming quite an imposing turn out. We proceed south and along the coast in the direction of the Cape of Good Hope, eighteen miles away.

Leaving the rugged mass of the Lion's Head apparently blocking the way behind us, on our right are the blue rollers breaking on the gleaming



white granite boulders, rounded and probably fallen from the majestic cliffs at whose feet we crawl along. Two thousand feet sheer, indented, serrated, and frowning, it might be thought that some giant hands had built an impregnable iron-bound fortress whose citadels stand secure amongst the clouds; twelve grand abutments face the ocean, and bear the name of "The Twelve Apostles." Though in the midst of summer, the breeze is distinctly chilly, and broken clouds herald the approach of rain, most unusual at this time of the year; during this excursion, however, we are favoured by the rains holding off, and as we strike inland, or rather across the neck of a peninsula, we see the sun brilliantly lighting up the patch of shining white sand near Hout's Bay.

The flowering shrubs are magnificent, and in addition, geraniums, queer, awkward, prickly cacti, with their red or yellow flowers, and blossoms of many kinds, white, crimson, or blue, are in profusion. Here and there we note small farmhouses, probably with Dutch occupants, and strips of land growing maize and other crops.

Having some time to spend here, we stroll down to the beach, where, as it is Bank Holiday, many townspeople have resorted with their families, and having outspanned the horses from their capacious

vehicles, are making what in Australia would be called "billy" tea, and enjoying the scene to the full. The striking feature of the beaches in this district is the huge white boulders, and in the scene now before us they play no unimportant part, for, with the thick bush, rich in colour, sloping precipitately down to them, they stand in shining contrast to the purple, rugged hills looming behind them across the water. Sheltered from the wind, the air is deliciously warm, so that the calm blue sea and the tongue of a persuasive companion invite to a bathe. That discretion is the better part of valour is quickly proved, however, when the black fins of sharks are pointed out to us at a little distance from the line of breakers. Even the presence of these undesirable fellow bathers did not, however, prevent some foolhardy persons from entering the water.

Passing the picturesque little police station, we interview Sergeant Furlong, of the Cape Mounted Police, clad in his brown semi-military uniform and helmet. He informs us that the neighbourhood abounds with the deadly puff-adder, numbers of which he has killed, exhibiting at the same time the jacket of one which he had found on the road the previous day; it is, perhaps, unnecessary to add that the skin has since found its way to Europe.

Arrived at the hotel, where lunch was said to be

awaiting us, we find ourselves amongst a very hungry Bank Holiday crowd, and by the exercise of a little ingenuity, after being warned by the landlady that we had better not show our noses in the dining-room before she gives us permission, we take up a position just outside the door, with half a score of eager impatient ones behind us. The jokes after the lapse of fifteen or twenty minutes become of a more serious description, but, the landlady's temper having a certain reputation, it is some time before a bold and daring spirit behind us musters up courage, passes us, and enters the room. Whether it be dynamite, the noise of ordinary kitchen missiles, or merely the tyrant's tongue and boot, we never shall know, but that young man's exit is made with a peculiar speed and a rueful countenance, whilst his companions find in him and his rout the means of rendering less irksome the dreary waiting. The main feature of a badly served meal, where a long arm, a quick eye, and a by no means silent tongue are much in requisition, is the very smart and nimble waiting of the black skinned maid—the only person to attend to about forty guests.

From Hout's Bay we pass to the rear of the huge cliffs, whose tops are now sharp and clear in the noonday sun, and which occasionally slope precipitously down to the road. Here and there

we pass an oak tree, relic of the past Dutch possession, and with perhaps as changeful a future before it.

Rising all the time, with Table Mountain to the left, we reach the crest of the hill and view a magnificent panorama; a long stretch of the bluest of seas, and the strange shapes of grotesque and dimly clear mountains in the far distance, while below us winds the road through the thick brushwood or the long grass of the slopes and shoulders of Table Mountain, shaded in places by the white and soft metallic leaves of the *Leucodendron argenteum*, or silver tree, whose silvery sheen is the admiration of every visitor. Farther on, beautiful Constantia, with the vineyards, the luscious strawberries and cream at Newlands Avenue, the magnificently wooded suburb Wynberg, are possessions of which Cape Town may be proud.

Our train stands in the station ready for its thousand miles journey; it is after ten at night, and the long sleeping cars (for this is the weekly mail train) are filled with passengers, some returning to feverish work after a too brief holiday, pleasure seekers, or "new chums" starting with enthusiasm and determination to the Land of Ophir. Each car has a narrow passage running along one side of it, and each is divided into two sections, off which

are curtained compartments for four persons. A folding table runs down the middle, affording scant room for movement ; and a folding shelf, for it is no more, can be let down from above each seat, thus forming the third and fourth beds.

Three nights and two days are to be spent on the cars, and American recollections had pictured beds comfortably made with pillows, blankets, and sheets. We are disagreeably surprised, for to our consternation we discover that absolutely nothing is provided for the comfort and convenience of passengers in this particular. This has since been remedied.

Still rising, 2700 feet during the night, it becomes very cold in the mountain air, and the single overcoat for covering, hand-bag for pillow, and hard, unyielding shelf, are not the most favourable conditions for inducing sleep, coupled with the racket and the vibration of the moving cars. Still, it appears to trouble none of the weary souls, who pass through the wild and rugged scenery of the far-famed Hex River Pass without so much as even a dream of it, and who wake at five in the morning to find themselves eternally creeping up, up the dry and stony gorges. Anxiously and expectantly we scan the scene, drinking in our first impressions of inland Africa. The colonist would

inform you that the country we are passing over was intensely, monotonously dull, but to the new-comer, the sight of the rocky gullies, serrated mountains and steep declivities, with the characteristic flat-topped kopjes, is novel and full of engaging possibilities.

It is already hot when the small boy part of the establishment's *personnelle*, in his shirt sleeves and with a manner distinguished by fresh colonial *brusquerie*, lays the cloth on our cramped and oscillating table, and the black and smiling cook provides us with an excellent breakfast. As the day advances, we enter the Great Karroo, or desert plain, and by this time the sun is beating down on the brown, parched ground, making the horizon waveringly uncertain in substance and position. A small scorched bush covers the ground, looking dead and dried, yet, strange to say, sheep prefer this to succulent grass, and can exist on it for days without water. Occasionally we note a green patch in the distance, and perhaps a farm dwelling, indicating a spot where a Boer or other farmer had sunk a well, and is giving the land the opportunity of showing what it can do if only it be supplied with water.

The Karroo is an immense plain at an elevation of about 2700 feet, and from about 150 to 200

miles in length ; it has one of the smallest rainfalls known, and when we were passing through, none whatever had fallen for months. However, water is to be found at varying depths in many places, and a large portion of the area is used for breeding immense numbers of oxen, sheep, and goats. In places we see the mimosa bush, with its spiteful-looking, poisonous thorns, its light green foliage and brilliant yellow flowers—the only restful colour in the landscape ; for the absence of grass, and in its stead the brown-red, rocky earth, trembling in the heat, is trying in the extreme to the eyes. In places we run close to the old waggon road, which the railroad has so completely superseded, and the ruined houses, unused water-dams, and numberless bleached bones of oxen show the effect of the modern mode of progression on what constituted once a most important source of occupation, and a lucrative source of income to horse and ox breeders on the line of route. It was contended at the time the projected railway was being discussed that it would open this country up, and that its proximity to Cape Town and adaptability for sheep farming would render it a district sought after wherever water could be found at a reasonable depth ; the result instead has apparently been to cripple it, and it would be safe to say that along

the line of route the population is now not one-fourth of what it used to be.

The open platform at the end of the car, though a dusty position, is a popular one, affording a much more extended view and often a cooling breeze. Suddenly our engine slows, whistling continual, sharp, short notes ; we look ahead, and see, almost under the wheels of the locomotive, the tail end of a large herd of cattle, blindly following their leaders across the line. This is an incident which is often repeated on account of oxen, sheep, or goats ; at night they are safely "kraaled" out of the way of jackals and dingoes, who, with ants and vultures, have picked clean the bones of many of the unfortunate animals whose remains we see scattered over the plains.

Occasionally black scraps of humanity of either sex pop up out of the bushes or thin grass (for this gradually begins to make its appearance). These are the guardians of the herds of cattle, &c., which are dotted over the rolling veldt ; lonely must be the lives of these children (for such are the majority), passing their days alone on the wild vastness of Africa with cattle or goats, the dingo, meercat, or anteater for fellows. There, far beyond in the distance, are the lofty ranges of mountains ever on our left, and looking, to the speculative "tenderfoot,"

a barrier between the wild unknown and the civilisation personified in the railroad.

Now and again we stop at a wayside station, often the only thing six feet above the level of the plain for miles. Of one in particular we have a recollection, where we awaited the arrival of the up train for forty minutes or more. The station-house constituted apparently the only building in a vast area ; on three sides the great expanse of distant veldt was shut from view by nearer undulations, and the long thin line of rails was the only object which made some change in a scene of intense monotony ; there stood that little house, unutterably solitary.

Now was happening the event of the week—the weekly express mail train, of an average speed of seventeen miles an hour, stood in the station, full of life and news from Cape Town, Old England, and Europe. Can one not imagine the excitement—the gathering of neighbouring farmers, their horses tethered at the rear, the busy importance of the station-master, and the fuss and bustle ? If you expect this to be the case you are sorely mistaken, for, after the station-master once lounges lazily out of his door on to the empty platform, he disappears from our sight, and apparently leaves the world, or what can be seen of it,





A BOER FARM.



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the experimental setup and the procedures followed during the study.

3. The third part of the document presents the results of the study, showing the data collected and the analysis performed. It includes several tables and figures that illustrate the findings of the research.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the implications of the study and the conclusions drawn from the results. It highlights the significance of the findings and their potential applications in the field of research.

5. The fifth part of the document provides a summary of the key points discussed throughout the document. It reiterates the importance of accurate record-keeping and the need for transparency in financial reporting.

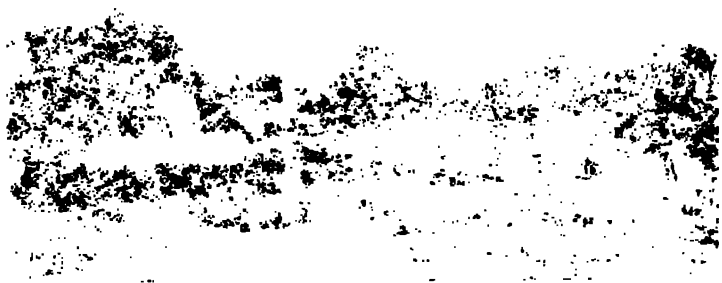
6. The sixth part of the document includes a list of references to the sources used in the study. It provides a comprehensive overview of the literature related to the topic of the research.

7. The seventh part of the document contains a list of appendices, which include additional data and information that support the findings of the study. These appendices provide a more detailed look at the data and the analysis performed.

8. The eighth part of the document includes a list of figures and tables, which are used to present the results of the study in a clear and concise manner. These visual aids help to illustrate the findings and make them easier to understand.

9. The ninth part of the document contains a list of footnotes, which provide additional information and clarification on certain points discussed in the main text. These footnotes are essential for a thorough understanding of the study.

10. The tenth part of the document includes a list of acknowledgments, where the author expresses gratitude to the individuals and organizations that provided support and assistance during the course of the study. This section is a way to recognize the contributions of others to the research.



to the few travellers who have taken the trouble to alight. The back of the station-house opens straight on to the veldt, without garden or dividing line. In this direction an empty bottle on a stick naturally proves too much for the stone throwing propensities of unoccupied youth, and gradually leads to the discovery that seated at the back is a young woman with one or two younger men, moonily oblivious of the burden of fresh life, interest, and news in the train so near. Close to them is a cart outspanned. Do these good folk stir? Not a hair's-breadth. What is the great throbbing world, outside and far away, to them? Why should the weekly train with its breath of active life and ambition, its load of enthusiasm and purpose, its sense of push and progress, move them? No, they are African Dutch and unambitious; they are Boer and slow of intellect; they are children of a vast solitude, and as yet untainted by dreams of a wilder ambition than of living on their sparsely grass-covered farms of 6000 acres or so, far separated perhaps from all humanity, in many instances inhabiting a two-roomed house, whose floor is a mixture of cowdung and earth, sleeping in the same room, male and female, roughly covered, and even without having so much as a thought of the formality of undressing, crowded out, perhaps,

by a thousand "strangers," crawling and jumping,—these are the typical Boers, whom the stranger may find kind and hospitable hosts on occasion, albeit brusque in manner. Up with the sun, their interest and occupation lies mainly with their herds, systematic cultivation of crops claiming generally only the attention required to supply them with their daily needs. Of improvements and progress no trace is to be seen, they are frugal in the extreme, shortsighted and without initiative; they will do the least necessary to earn a living, and are content, year after year, to produce but just sufficient to keep themselves and families. At one place we saw a dead horse rotting, not a hundred yards from a farm front door. The typical Boer will look on, indolently smoking, while the Kaffir servants, who even now are half slaves, do the drudgery of his work, and are often ill-used for doing it, for the Boer holds the Kaffir in the light of an animal, a brute without a soul—the repression by England of the constant cruelties practised on them being the great cause of the Boer insurrection.

One day the Boer wakes up, however; he becomes energetic, shrewd, and farseeing. His sons are growing up, they clamour for farms of their own, and no farm of less than 6000 acres will satisfy them; whence is the land to be obtained? There

is none in present Boer possession available. There are others in the same position; he receives news of a "commando," he and his sons take up their arms, and give the goods which may be requisitioned by the commanding field cornet—their waggon perhaps may be needed, their oxen, horses or grain, and none are paid for. Ntabankulu shall smart, he has let his oxen stray on ground which is Boer by every process of Boer reasoning, though never before claimed by them; Ntabankulu shall be crushed, and his forfeit shall be one third his kingdom (and may Boer sons prosper thereon, and repeat the process from time to time as may become necessary), may the God of Joshua be praised, and the Amalekites be blotted out under His foot, and His chosen people reign in the land. In personal greed of land, in absolute disregard of justice, or of the right of possession (save his own), in cruelties almost unheard of, the Boer stands pre-eminent when in this mood, yet the simple character of this untutored being, shrewd and strong, cannot but command admiration, and that beneath all this there are sterling and valuable qualities is testified to by the fact that many who can claim to know him speak in the highest terms of him.

We leave our Dutch friends to their happy listlessness, and our train bears us far away, allowing

silence to creep once more like a pall over the lonely dwelling. The whole of this country, from Worcester to De Aar, has a clear, invigorating, dry atmosphere of the utmost value to consumptive persons.

The Niewveld range comes to an end beyond Beaufort West, and further on the railway passes over an immense plain of very many miles in extent, and bounded on three sides by lofty though distant mountain ranges.

The effect of the intensely dry, clear atmosphere is strange; half an hour's walk might apparently span the plain, yet it is twenty miles across; we see sixty miles as if five; ranges look absolutely close, and details are almost painfully distinct in the upper portion of the hills. Below, however, and even dissolving the mountains themselves in places, is a lovely sheet of pure, silvery water. Trees surround it, and the purple of the mountains contrasts in the foreground with the rich fresh colour of the mimosa bushes and other vegetation, from which we see suspended the nests of the weaver bird; all this, intensified by the realisation of the immense magnitude of the view, constitutes a characteristic African scene not easily to be forgotten.

We move on still, though little changing our relative position with the mountains; alas, the cool

liquid lake changes its shape and shifts its position, mountains reappear, trees resolve themselves into simple veldt, and the mirage passes, leaving one with an unsatisfied longing.

But a few years back these plains were roamed over by thousands of gazelles, or bok, of various kinds. Owing to the unerring rifle of the Boer, sad to say, they are now comparatively few in number, and we were to be deemed fortunate that we saw some solitary specimens a few yards away. Here and there we are semi-startled by the sudden rush of a brown meercat, with its smooth coat, long neck and squirrel-like head, adorned, too, with a tail, long, bushy, and straight. Above, soaring in the sky, are immense vultures, or "aasvogels," and ever-present hawks; while low, among the stones and sparse bushes, lurk the deadly puff-adder, cobra, or whip snake. In places the ground appears with a rash of huge anthills, many of which have apparently been excavated, two reasons being assigned—one, the depredations of the hungry anteater, and the other, that they have served the Kaffir labourers on the line as convenient ovens.

Mounting ever, before us lies a ridge, the lowest part of the now encircling ranges. The ascent is steep and our engine puffs and labours, crawling up at a walking pace. We gain the summit; on

the plains the faint thin columns of whirlwind-borne dust appear, lifting their mysterious heads far above the intervening mountain spurs. The scenery grows rougher and rockier, cactus and euphorbia shoot out from dry and barren soil, and veritable hedges of them defy the white man's touch.

Rounding a sudden corner, one of those strange and instantaneous changes of interest occur, causing a quick revulsion of feeling, and contrasting with the great solitude of the plains just left. Below us in the evening light, the enclosure reaching to our embankment in front, and backed and encircled by precipitous rocks, lies a large and picturesque farmhouse ; it is Dutch in build, and in front is a large piece of water with great pendulous trees over it. Here is every evidence of life and prosperity, stock of the usual kinds fill the yard, and children play unconscious of the fact that but comparatively few years ago no homestead stood there, and it was the haunt of the lion and the leopard, the Hottentot and the distorted, half animal Bushman ; of these, all that yet remain are driven into remote and inaccessible regions by the white man in front and the warlike Kaffir in the rear.

We have crossed the great Orange River by the time the morning sunshine wakes us, and have entered the first of the Boer Republics, whose late

President was intermediary in the settlement of the Transvaal War. The apparent absence of black population in these districts is striking, and subsequent contrast with Natal speaks volumes on the subject of Boer and English rule compared. Half-castes are numerous at the large stations, but the true black man, though doubtless to be found without difficulty, is rarely seen.

The country is destitute of interest from a scenic point of view, but here, as far behind us, the farms are excellent and paying property, and would not be exchanged on any account by their owners for those in the proximity of Cape Town. The conditions of tenure are easy; there is a ready market for their cattle and lovely Angora goats, drovers collecting them; their wool troubles them little in the shearing and sorting, which latter is most indolently done, enabling Australia to score an easy first in the home markets; their mealies and corn grow easily, and their slow temperament suffers little disturbance if their crops suffer from drought.

The cry of "ostrich farm" causes us to look up. We find that there is now, along the line and around a huge piece of land covered with the usual mimosa, a substantial iron fencing. We look with eager eyes for our first sight of an African ostrich, and are disappointed, for not one can be seen.

Later on, however, we see some way ahead the gawky, black-bodied, long-legged creatures. Quick as thought the Kodak is prepared, and as the bird's form flashes across the "finder" of the instrument—snap goes the shutter and a picture is obtained, which unhappily proves but indifferent.

Much money has, as too often happens under like conditions, been made and lost in this industry of ostrich farming, and the aid of the incubator having been called in, a much better result is obtained than in the early days, when natural incubation was the only means available. When the young birds leave the shell they are cared for by a little "tottie," or Hottentot girl, who plays the part of a mother to them. They form a most absurd sight, these big, ungainly chickens, especially at meal times. Unable to feed themselves, they have to be crammed with boiled mealies, until the tension of their "breadbaskets" indicates sufficiency—for such is the gauge used.

At six months old a bird is worth from £10 to £15, and a good adult male bird fetches a very large sum. He is from seven to nine feet high, and is black, his tail and wing feathers being white. He is ferocious, and fleetier than the best of horses; nevertheless, with all his acuteness of vision and length of leg, his pate is small, and in some ways he is

the biggest idiot going. Put a rail but three feet high in front of him, and in his greatest rage, unless he happen to tumble over it, it will prove an effectual barrier, the idea of utilising his length of leg by stepping over it never striking him. He has one virtue, which might be taken to heart by other bipeds than ostriches—he shares the maternal cares of the hen bird in a noble way; punctually every evening he takes his place on the nestful of eggs, his coat suiting the darkness, as the brown dress of the hen suits the russet landscape by day, and there sits till daylight comes again. Their feathers are taken from them bi-annually, the majority being cut, the few that are plucked being simply surface ones which the bird scarcely feels. The horror at the cruelty of plucking these birds alive is therefore hardly well founded. The feathers are sent mainly to Cape Town or Port Elizabeth, there realising prices from £20 to £100 per pound. As we proceed we see many of these birds quietly feeding near the line.

At regular intervals the whole length of the line there are huts, apparently of turves, wherein live the gangs of Kaffirs employed in keeping the line in order, and also the iron houses of the foremen of the gangs.

Forty miles to our left are the diamond fields of

Jagersfontein, distinguished from the famous ones of Kimberley by the stones having somewhat of a yellow tinge, and of course by the fields being by no means so extensive. They are worked in connection with De Beers, and quite recently some remarkable finds have been made.

Bloemfontein is the capital of the State, and is surely one of the warmest places in Africa; most uninteresting at a casual glance, there was but one spot which had any pretension to picturesqueness. We leave without regret, and continue our way on this, the last day of the year, in sweltering heat, whilst our dear ones at home are experiencing intense cold.

A new and human interest arises. We begin to see occasional Kaffirs, droll objects, with gutta-percha faces and a single blanket just hung round them, clasped at the chest by one hand, an ebony thigh occasionally obtruding itself. The veldt now is purely grass land, indeed one might imagine oneself on the rolling prairies of America; the sight of black cattle spread like minute black dots over the immensity of green carpet is, for all the world, like Catlin's pictures of the home of the Red Indian. Five thousand feet above the level of the sea, the cactus flowers on their tall strange stalks are here in full flower, whereas in Cape Town they had long

gone to seed. There are maize and cornfields in abundance, though the soil looks incapable of growing aught but cacti, so dry and arid is it.

We pass over numbers of the dry beds of rivers, whose banks are precipitous and high, yet which cannot hold the floods caused by the torrential rains which come about this season of the year. In the wet season, huge iron bridges are sometimes washed away, and a peculiar interest attaches to one of these spots, so far as one of our party is concerned, on account of this fact, as will become apparent hereafter. There is, perhaps, in an exceptional river bed a pool remaining, or even a sluggish stream crawls disconsolate in a great world of sandy bottom, and a libel against the Kaffirs was uttered by a fellow passenger to the effect that a team of oxen or so with their respective waggons will pass through it, drinking the filthy muddy water; the Kaffir drivers will then bathe themselves, and end by using the result as a beverage. Water is stored at regular intervals for the use of travellers and their bullocks, in huge reservoirs formed by dams constructed by the Government.

The first native kraal of our trip we saw in the afternoon, a collection of strange beehive-looking structures made of branches and rushes, with a low turf wall to start them with. At the door of one

ran six of the nakedest, funniest, podgiest, little nigger boys to be imagined, and not far distant was to be observed the method of preparing hide for whip thongs, the hide being twisted round and round by a lever, whilst a heavy weight hung suspended by it, the whole depending from a set of sheer legs.

Our last night in the train was comfortable up to midnight—the moonlight on the veldt was lovely, a clear cold atmosphere rendering the moon and stars extraordinarily bright, so that to read would be easy. We turned in about ten o'clock, just the hour when, allowing for the difference in longitude, all the church bells in England would be bursting into music, and families would be gathered to begin the New Year together; were we not greatly out of it, lonely strangers in a savage land?

Sleep had just come to our tired eyelids when some thoughtful gentry, no doubt imagining to themselves our intense longing to let in the New Year in Africa, awoke us and every one else at midnight by traversing the length of the car with uproarious and unmelodious voices; our New Year was unhappily begun with thoughts of vengeance.

The early morning found us stirring, for during the night we had crossed the Vaal River, tributary of the Orange River, into the South African

Republic. The Orange River is nearly 1300 miles in length, and at its junction with the Vaal in the middle of Griqualand West, it is yet 500 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, while its source is on the north western slopes of the wild Drakensburg mountains north of Natal.

The air feels bitterly cold as we view increasing signs of the civilisation we are approaching. Quite a crowd stands on the narrow gangway, embarrassing to some extent the small boy busy setting breakfast, and running to and fro from the kitchen car. Even the most respectable of us in point of age suffers from a sharp dig in the ribs, accompanied by the command "Out of the way, sir, please."

From the Transvaal frontier the cars are taken in charge by a Dutch conductor, and ordinary trains are dragged by Transvaal locomotives, but, as our English conductor bitingly informs us, with an ordinary light train even two foreign locomotives sometimes fail to move their load, and to harness any number of them to the train of heavy Pullman cars would be utterly futile, consequently of necessity the superior quality of English manufactures is demonstrated, and the same engine takes us to our destination.

This part of the railroad, between Vereeniging at the frontier and Johannesburg, is of compara-

tively recent construction, and is distinctly bumpy. Railway charges, too, are enormous; and it is cheaper, so far, to off-load goods at Vereeniging, and convey them the rest of the way by waggon. Here and there we see half clad blacks and occasional long bullock teams, and the mines with their battery-houses and pitheads inform us that the time has come to leave our rolling home.

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CHAPTER III.

JOHANNESBURG THE GOLDEN.

"ARE baths still standing at 3s. 6d., as we heard at Cape Town?" is almost our first enquiry. The grateful news being received that, though scarce indeed, some water still exists in the district, we walk down the broad streets to Mr. Heath's hotel.

Only nine years ago, one or two Boer farmers were the only inhabitants of a treeless veldt, which is now covered by a town of 60,000 to 70,000 inhabitants, with wide streets, tree-sheltered (though, by the way, of an atrocious unevenness), tramways and electric light, parks and woods—whose trees are already, though but a few years old, imposingly high—fine buildings in brick and stone, three large and many smaller hotels, and fine spacious squares. Off the main streets the buildings are mainly of corrugated iron, and in the charming suburbs some of the most cosy verandahed homes can be seen built of this material.

The Transvaal, as before stated, was first entered

by a large party of Boers in 1835, the Bechuana Kaffirs of the district being then hard pressed by the Zulu army under Moselekatse (Umselegazi), which afterwards found its way northwards into what is now known as Matabeleland. The Bechuanas therefore called in the Boers to their aid. The Boers, nothing loth, saw in this a Heaven-given opportunity, and, having aided the Kaffirs to repel the invader, claimed half the territory in payment. No doubt the consent of the King had been obtained to this arrangement, or rather, to put it more particularly, his mark had been affixed to a document which he could neither read nor understand, and which might not necessarily be explained to his sable majesty; nevertheless, the result was the same and the land passed into the hands of the Boers.

In size the Transvaal is about equal to the total area of the British Isles, and its population, white and native, is about 800,000, of which probably 170,000 are white.

It is admirably watered, being bounded on the south by the broad Vaal River and the less important Buffalo. The Olifants River pierces it to the centre, while for three hundred miles and more on its northern and western frontier the great Limpopo flows, fed by six great arteries on the Transvaal side alone.

Here, as we stand in the garden of a cosy home-
stead at the Jeppestown suburb, we are on the
crest of a ridge which marks a great dividing of
the waters. On the one hand we see, or shortly
shall see after one of the heavy rains there experi-
enced, streamlets which will find their way north
through the sub-tropical, crocodile-haunted course
of the Limpopo to the Indian Ocean, while on the
other hand, they fall into the Vaal, through the
steep, precipitous gorges of the Orange River, and
thirsty wastes, into the Atlantic Ocean on the other
side of Africa.

A cloud of locusts has but just left its mark on
Johannesburg. Thousands are still lying about, the
roof spouting is full of them, and the story of the
attack made by them on the green dress of the
unhappy lady pedestrian is still told to the marines.

To-day is holiday in Johannesburg, being New
Year's day. Indeed, in the colonial fashion the
holiday extends far into the week, and, as a result,
we see none of the busy crowding in the thorough-
fares, and the unremitting roar of the batteries has
ceased. Some excitement there is, however, for
on the ground of many of the large mining com-
panies are compounds where the "boys," as the
Kaffir workers are called, live during their stay at
the mines, sometimes as many as a thousand being

employed at a pound per week, food and board, by the larger companies. Isaac Watts's Satan is apparently as busy amongst black men as amongst voyaging whites, for, having nothing better to do, they patronise the canteens, *i.e.*, get drunk, and the representatives of one mine, perhaps numbering hundreds, wage fierce and bloody warfare against those of another, knobkerries and knives being employed, and fatalities being common. Again, the burglar is hard at work dealing with safes in the most modern and approved fashion, the *modus operandi* being to remove the safe from the office at night (not necessarily a very difficult operation in this land of corrugated iron, apart from dodging watchers and dealing with the heavy weights), say to an adjacent mining property, and even though there be houses in the close vicinity, a little dynamite will be exploded on the top and, hey presto! all that remains is to walk away with the proceeds, for, if one may judge by comments in the newspapers, there is little to fear from the police. Such an event occurred during our short stay, and we also saw evidences of another.

The most remarkable fact about this large town is, that the whole of the materials used in its construction, iron, stone, and wood, to say nothing of the immense and ponderous machinery of the

mines, had, up to 1892, to be dragged perhaps hundreds of miles by ox-waggon over the veldt. Times have changed to a certain extent. The town is no longer exposed to the famine it has before now suffered, owing to the summer heat scorching up the grass of the veldt, and preventing the teams from travelling, thus cutting off the town effectually from all communication with the outside world. It is not so long since water was sold at a shilling a bucket, and even now eggs cost sixpence apiece, the fowl itself not being much more expensive. The railway to Pretoria was declared open in 1893, and a train run over the distance of thirty-five miles under the protest of the authorities, the President keeping them to their promise to open by the beginning of the year. It was whispered with bated breath that, seeing that under the conditions the enforced journey might prove dangerous, President Paul Kruger should be invited to share the risk he was responsible for. It is no light thing to speak of the President in any spirit of levity, however, for a shopkeeper in Pretoria of an opposite political party was fined ten pounds and costs for saying in jest that he was keeping his rotten eggs in store for "Oom Paul," the Presidential election being at the time in progress. The judges, too, it is said, are somewhat prone to demonstrate their loyalty to the particular

President in office, by dealing severely with any unfortunate who happens to have been indiscreet in the expression of his opinions.

Oom Paul is a picturesque figurehead, shrewd and careful to a degree, he receives £8000 a year salary and £300 for functions ; he has no functions, and lives on the £300. Conservative to the utmost, he is the head of the older, more bigoted and anti-English Boers, though, luckily, much more far-seeing and reasonable. In diplomacy he has shown himself the equal of many a trained European minister, and he holds the gradual rise of English participation in electoral matters in the greatest distrust. It must be understood that under the present laws no Englishman or foreigner can have a vote in elections except under almost impossible conditions, and no alien may hold a seat in the Volksraad. Though taxes are most severe, and the Uitlander is practically made to pay ninety per cent. of the revenue, in poll taxes, duties, licences of all descriptions, often (as in the case of land transfer), most exacting, the hunter after gold for long found no time to remedy or to agitate for the removal of these impositions, and the Boer calmly grunted satisfaction. Take, for example, land tenure ; it is held on a lease from the government of ninety-nine years, a yearly tax being paid on it. Every time

it changes hands another tax of 4 per cent. of the total purchase money is levied, even though it may do so once a week. The recent attempted revolution and Dr. Jameson's "raid," whatever its whole history may be, points to the fact that the conditions of life had become intolerable, and in the eyes of many, the rebuffs given to constitutional agitation were sufficient justification for a resort to force.

A trace of this still existing anti-English feeling and the fear of the rise of British power (and they are right, for sooner or later it means absorption), is shown in the fact that when Kruger was paying a rare visit to Johannesburg, noticing that the word "street" on the street nameplates was in English, he caused the last three letters to be painted out, and the effect of this all over the town (for the Boer equivalent had not been substituted), was most remarkable.

Johannesburg is situated about the middle of the main reef of gold-bearing rock about forty miles in length, and several mines are in the town itself. Many are very rich, and up to the present moment the surface having, so to speak, only been scratched, there seems to be an immense future before the district.

Coal, though generally of an inferior quality, is to be found in abundance in the Transvaal, and it

can be had fairly cheaply, one mine being about twelve miles away. Other materials, too, exist in abundance, especially copper; though but little if any attention is paid to them.

House rents are excessively high, as is the cost of labour of all kinds. In the house "boys" (the term universally employed for male Kaffirs of whatever age), are usually engaged to wait and do the house work. They are often amiable in disposition, fairly hardworking and trustworthy, even making excellent nurses. They earn from fifteen shillings to a pound a week in this service, and sometimes use their master as a bank. This is occasionally profitable to the master, for, their one fault being a liability to suddenly make up their minds that they are tired of service or of the place, they disappear one evening, not even taking the trouble to ask for their money. Some are jolly, good-tempered fellows, making occasionally the most ludicrous blunders, such as may here be placed on record.

Being asked by a lady of our acquaintance to skin a hare, the new "boy" disappeared, and after a lengthy interval returned and explained that he could not do it, it was too difficult. On examination it was found that he had been attempting to pluck the creature, having taken a pattern from the fowl he had prepared the day before.

On another occasion the new "boy" having been told to light a fire in the drawing-room, saw the coalscuttle with coals already in it and naturally concluded that it was the fireplace, and so fulfilled his mission to his mistress's horror!

It is a thing to be thankful for that the rainy season in Johannesburg is in the summer, for in the winter the elevation being great the winds are at times bitterly piercing. The rain, too, is no joke, as we, with the fortune which had followed one of us in Australia, had reason to discover.

As far as the climate is concerned, it is a healthy one. Care must be taken here, as everywhere else in Africa, to avoid chills, to be temperate and regular in eating and drinking, and to preserve an equable temperament. Nothing causes dysentery and fever so much as excitement, irregularity, chill, and drink, and the suddenness with which an apparently healthy man is cut off is appalling, many dying in thirty-six hours after having first been taken ill. The sanitary state of the town, though even now unsatisfactory, is immensely improved upon that of the early days; it was then shocking, with the result that the mortality among the adventurers, many of whom lived in all seasons under canvas, was enormous.

We are one day reminded that we are in a mining

camp and not in Fleet Street, by hearing that a reporter on one of the daily journals, who had spoken slightly of the acting of the ladies of a company then performing in the town, had been called to account by them, and soundly thrashed. Having an opportunity of witnessing the talent of a specimen company one evening, our opinion strongly coincided with that of the reporter. However, not having the opportunity or temptation which the luckless journalist doubtless experienced, of airing our opinions publicly on the matter, we escaped the consequent castigation, and can but simply record the incident as typical of the dangers incurred by the conductors of newspapers on the Rand.

We pass the Stock Exchange Buildings and hear the surging murmur within. Things are quiet in Johannesburg nowadays, so far as speculation is concerned, compared with the state of madness and fever of the years prior to 1890, when fortunes were made by perhaps one lucky stroke, and thousands of pounds changed hands with as little thought as if they were coppers. The infection of gambling appeared to seize every one, and the Stock Exchange was an irresistible attraction to all classes. The banks, amongst other businesses, were considerably inconvenienced by this fact, for

no sooner had they sent a clerk to Johannesburg than he left them to go on 'Change. Business was mostly transacted in the streets and this custom remains to this day, the pavements in the heart of the town being crowded with people busily transacting their affairs. Recklessness characterised almost everything, and the proper and legitimate work of developing the mines was hindered, and their stability in some cases was rendered doubtful through manipulation with consequent reconstruction or amalgamation, minor shareholders often coming off very badly. The crash came, the bubble burst, and shares held at an inflated value sank to a merely nominal one, causing wholesale ruin on 'Change, and stockbrokers with nothing to do and nothing to do it with, to become a drag on the market. But all through, though by many in England it was thought to be the ruin of the Rand goldfields, it spelt but the death, or at least reduction, of the unhealthy element of paper speculation, the solid strength of the mines remaining unaffected. The whole community was benefited by a wholesome lesson being learned, and the opportunity given for the mines to become established on a solid and trustworthy basis. There can be no doubt now that advantage was taken of this, with the result that the majority of the mining companies are able now

to utilise, with growing fullness, the magnificent resources with which they are endowed, some paying dividends of a hundred per cent. on their original capital. On the main reef there are more than eighty companies, many of which have only scratched the surface, and many of which again have not even sounded the bottom of the gold producing stratum.

The two prominent financial powers on the Rand are Barnato and Eckstein, the former a man of immense energy and power, who, in an incredibly short time, has contrived to amass an enormous fortune and to control the largest undertakings. In the battle of wits that has been going on on the Rand, where it has always been a case of diamond cut diamond, and the longest head and the keenest eye coming out best, Mr. Barnato shares the foremost place with the house of Eckstein, which, saviour or absorber of many a concern during the crisis, forms a worthy rival to the bold and successful financier. The offices of these two firms are probably the finest buildings in Commissioner Street, the premier thoroughfare of the town.

We visit several of the mines; the Spes Bona, Wemmer, Ferreira, and Langlaagte Estate, though we do not descend the shafts on this occasion, but content ourselves with inspecting the battery houses,

where the scores of stamps thunder continuously, crushing the hard rock into a fine powder. This powder is washed down a flat trough over a layer of mercury which amalgamates the greater part of the gold and permits the residue to flow away. These "tailings" are now treated with cyanide of potassium in large vats, and the resulting liquor is subsequently subjected to an electric current, or brought into contact with zinc shavings, the gold being deposited. It is said that there is a fortune in the tailings on which an important part of Johannesburg is built, the above process only having come into vogue in later years. The amalgam is collected monthly and the mercury separated from the gold, which is generally cast into bars of sufficient weight to be difficult of carriage. At the New Primrose mine the engine-room is quite a picture, and the manager, Mr. —, is naturally proud of it and its contents, together with the great battery and cyanide houses. Many of these mines have their own reservoir, and perhaps water rights in the "spruit" or stream. At the time of our visit the drought had lasted so long that there was great anxiety, failure of the water supply of course meaning stoppage of the mines.

The drive of five or six miles gave us an excellent idea of the capabilities of the "Cape cart," on

a road which would startle the average Englishman. A two wheeled vehicle drawn by a pair of horses, it appears to stand any number of strains, and to adapt itself to any angle or combination of angles. The four seats face the front, the roomy, comfortable ones in the rear being reached by lifting the hinged front one. In case of rain or fierce sunshine, there is a waterproof hood which covers driver and all, and an apron which fastens up to the neck of those in front, so that there is ample protection against "wind and weather." It is well to remember, when driving under these conditions, that too close a contiguity to the supports of the hood is likely, on account of the irregularities of the road, to result in a "black eye" or a bruised head, the movements of the cart being occasionally irregular and unexpected. These carts are a speciality of South Africa, the best being made at Kimberley or Capetown. An English vehicle would not last a month.

Here in Johannesburg is a strange collection of nationalities and men of various ranks. There are Chinese, Japanese, Kaffirs of many kinds, Hindoos, French, German, Dutch, and English. One might see the English knight employed as a clerk, and the quondam Member of Parliament trying to retrieve his fortunes. There is the Hindoo woman with a

gleaming, peacock-blue print with gorgeous orange shawl festooned round her, and the Kaffir with an old, red, military coat, a striped shirt hanging underneath, a rainbow-coloured umbrella, and not even an apology for trousers—his arms, too, being adorned with apparently ornamental fixtures in the shape of brass rings. These “boys” amuse themselves at times by dancing, especially after having managed to get hold of the vile concoction representing whisky which, supplied for native consumption, is rapidly ruining fine races, and is mainly composed of tobacco juice and “blue stone” (sulphate of copper). The effect of this deadly mixture on even a native’s stomach and head can be imagined. Their dance is a strange, incomprehensible one, especially under the above conditions.

Driving one day around the suburbs, we pass the large brick hospital, situated on an eminence and commanding a fine view of Doornfontein (the best residential part), the distant hilly veldt, and the Waterworks valley. The last is the fashionable drive, and accordingly we patronise it. Far down we view a large clump of trees surrounding a house, the extensive area of land being fenced in and grazed by numerous cattle. This is the residence of a Boer farmer of the old type, who resents the English intrusion intensely, who has profited to the

tune of say £200,000 by the hated intrusion, and yet has not a civil word to say to any one of the invaders. It is said that he keeps his money in his house, the current story attaching as appropriately to him as to anyone else—of the Boer who would not bank his money because the manager must surely have dishonest motives in tempting him to part with it by offering actually to pay him something for the use of it, instead of charging for the trouble of taking it in custody!

On our right we notice a heap of earth a short distance away, with a low walled enclosure and tent near. Two or three "boys" are occupied with the arrangement of some small tree branches. We stop to discover what they are doing, and to obtain a distant "photo" of them, when a gentlemanly man clad in rough and earth-stained clothing, and with arms and face burnt almost to the same tint, approaches us, and on learning what we are engaged upon, invites us to make a nearer inspection. We descend to discover that he is prospecting for gold, and has sunk a shaft some eighty feet, then driving a level two hundred and fifty feet under the hill, hoping at any moment to strike the reef. The "boys" are engaged in making a hut; though, judging by its size, for two persons it promises very close quarters. A cup of tea at the camp fire is





welcome, and the opportunity is seized of taking a picture of the very mixed group. Acceding to the proposal that we should descend the shaft into the workings, one at a time, we put a foot into the iron bucket, grasp the rope with one hand, and guide ourselves with the remaining limbs against the side of the shaft, as the men at the wooden windlass overhead lower us. Half-way down we meet the up-coming bucket (an ordinary stout-made iron one), and having been warned at the outset to be careful lest it catch ours and upset us, kick it aside as it approaches. When both are landed at the bottom, we are piloted by the prospector's mate to the end of the level, two hundred and fifty feet away, where the air is extremely close, and two half-naked and shining Kaffirs laboriously attack the rock in front. It strikes us that, though our colliers in England are by no means white during their daily occupation, they are pale in comparison with these African "brethren."

Arrived safely at the top, the ascent of the second amateur miner is awaited by the camera, which profits by the occasion to record the method used.

By this time the builders of the hut have become tired by their labours, and are seated on the ground smoking. Their dress is peculiar, they having divided a suit between them so that one is in

trousers only, the other in shirt and coat. The operation of smoking is a peculiar one, and hardly appeals to European tastes. A cow horn has a thin tube inserted at right angles to it about half-way down, at the end of the tube is a bowl fashioned roughly out of soap stone; the horn is filled with water, covering the aperture of the tube, and, in a sitting posture, the smoker applies his mouth to the end of the cow horn and takes a deep and long inspiration. The effect is sometimes startling and often ludicrous, for, the pipe being then passed on, the Kaffir resigns himself to coughing, choking and spluttering, until he is sufficiently recovered to begin again. One of the "boys" before us—a very popular one with his master—is a most merry individual, with a face ever wreathed in contagious smiles. He evinces his musical tastes by incessantly blowing a piercing whistle, one of a considerable collection hanging by a chain round his neck. We are informed that he makes a great hobby of collecting these, his neck being the repository, and would do almost anything to get a new one. He takes his turn at the pipe, but, apparently too much engaged in inspecting us, by some means or other he gets too large a dose of smoke into his lungs, and, bursting into laughter, he consequently chokes, gurgles, and coughs, with the tears coursing down

his beaming, india-rubber face, making an irresistibly laughable subject. It may be added that the material smoked is not tobacco, but a "weed" of some other description.

The method of carrying milk is worthy of notice, a "boy" on horseback has a large leather girdle, in which are inserted often a dozen or more of wine bottles filled with milk, reminding one immediately of John Gilpin.

Here is the Rand Club, intended for the use of everybody who is anybody on the Rand. It is a building which would do credit to any town, and which cost an enormous sum of money in the days when difficulties of transport made everything so dear. As we lunch there we find the great luncheon-room crowded with persons, many most intimately connected with the history of the Rand, and a first-class meal is served by deft waiters. These coolies, seen in numbers in the streets, are not the only importations from the East, for in the streets of Johannesburg, as in the streets of Tokio, are jinrickshaws, though drawn by sturdy, well built Kaffirs, rather than by Japs.

One thing is made very obvious during our stay, and that is that Johannesburg is not a remote corner *sans* civilisation, *sans* society, *sans* culture, *sans* everything that makes life worth living; on the

contrary we found there a charming circle full of interest and happiness. We also heard the ladies declare that the shops were almost as good as those of London. Must we allow something for a new born patriotic fervour ?

Before leaving the Transvaal let us realise what it is now and what its resources and prospects are, as compared, say, with those of our own country a hundred years ago.

A rich agricultural and pasture country, with enormous mineral wealth, it possesses two of the fundamental attributes to an important country. One railway already reaches its capital from Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, another connects it with Natal, and a third places Pretoria in direct communication with the finest port of all, viz., Delagoa Bay, the country thus being tapped at nearly every point. It has a population approaching three quarters of a million, and, though old prejudices are still strong, and the training of hundreds of years cannot easily be forgotten, there is an increasing disposition amongst the Dutch element to progress, aided enormously, of course, by the influx and example of fresh European blood.

Let us turn to England. In 1800 she had a population of only 8,000,000, she had mineral resources practically untouched ; as in the Trans-

vaal, her land was rich for crops and cattle, and she possessed a magnificent sea board, though her means of internal communication were not what those of the Transvaal are, and she had not the advantage of the enormous strides in the resources of civilisation made during the present century.

Again the Anglo-Saxon energy of character was her strength, but is it not evident—without going to an absurd length in comparing the two countries, for the geographical position is against the Transvaal—that the increase of the European element may have a spurring and strengthening effect in Africa, that will one day render it a country of wealth and importance ?

CHAPTER IV.

A TRANSVAAL COACH JOURNEY.

UNHAPPILY our stay flashes to an end, and at 4 a.m., two of us venture out to find the coach which is to take us a hundred and fifty miles to the gates of Natal. Oh, the misery of that unearthly hour! We stumble along semi-dazed in the half-light of a chilly dawn, with grey and silent houses on either side; then a vision appears before our eyes—are we dreaming? Is this eighteenth century England, or is the wondrous vehicle with its ten mules a second-hand Cinderella's coach? The dull red painted body, gloriously emblazoned with meandering devices in dirty yellow, hangs freely between the enormous wheels, on heavy leather straps. Copious supplies of mud yet adhere to the wheels, sides, and flapping leathern window blinds, giving us an earnest as to the probable state of the road, and a forecast of our later experiences. With a whoop we start, luckily the only passengers, the accommodation being for twelve inside and six out. At a rattling pace we soon get clear of the town,

apparently bumping over everything that came in the way, still it is not unbearable, and the feeling of novelty either soon wears off or the cushions grow unaccountably harder, for after we have gone our day's journey, the results of being "tender-feet" (to use the American equivalent of "new chum"), and not accustomed to this mode of travelling, were painfully obvious.

After an hour, during which the road steadily grows rougher (to put it mildly), in order to change mules we stop at a large corrugated iron stable, sticking up unceremoniously on the bare veldt, without the most shadowy pretence of apology for its barefaced ugliness and its domination of the landscape. For us departure speedily cures this offence and, seated above, behind the drivers, we watch it getting smaller and less abominable, until distance mercifully covers it. We have two drivers, and while doubtless most necessary, the arrangement harmonises excellently with the Boer character, for the Kaffir does the work, holding the heavy reins and steering the mulish team, whilst the Boer looks on and cracks his whip. This, however, it must be confessed, is no ordinary accomplishment, for with a bamboo twelve feet long grasped in both hands, he curls and winds a thin, sinuous, snake-like thong through the air, long enough to reach the leaders

forty feet away, and ends with an ear-splitting crack precisely in the place where he happens to desire it to exert its moral persuasiveness.

We breakfast at a little oasis in the wilds, and relentlessly attack our journey again with fresh mules. Far away we sometimes see a tree or so, meaning a Boer's farm, but strange to say, we never see a native Kraal. Ahead are three minute black specks, which a little time resolves into individual Kaffirs, laboriously wending their way back into servitude at the mines, not having saved enough in previous seasons to buy wives and live in happy laziness ever after; but perhaps having had a high old time of it for a few months in their native mountains of Natal. One can quite understand that some of these gentlemen are not the most desirable persons to encounter alone or after dark, and we heard several tales of outrage and murder done. Still, the safety of South African travelling is thorough, and her history gives her a magnificent character as compared with that of the Australian goldfields, where coaches innumerable were "stuck up" and robbed, whereas in South Africa such an event is unknown, in spite of the fact that large quantities of gold are often sent by coach without a guard. Even European Spain cannot compare with this, for, during a recent visit to a northern

port we found that a coach was robbed by highwaymen only fourteen miles distant from the town, one of considerable importance.

One of the most strange inhabitants of the Transvaal is a small black bird, the Sakabula, overburdened and overwhelmed with an embarrassing length of tail. Possessing a body not much larger than that of a sparrow, its poor little flesh is mortified by the addition of an insane appendage perhaps fourteen inches long, with which, in rising, it struggles for a time, finally conquering and sweeping down on the breeze with an erratic, wavy, and tadpole-like movement. Here and there, too, are vultures and hawks, whilst their fourfooted comrades on the earth are prowling leopards and hyenas.

We race into the charming little town of Heidelberg—a place of mark in the early part of the Transvaal War, inasmuch as the flag of the South African Republic was first hoisted there—and draw up in the square. But ten miles earlier, at a lonely city consisting of a corrugated iron stable and a so-called hotel, we were joined by one of the three inhabitants of the place. These inhabitants consisted of the landlady, the barman, and a Zulu “boy.” It was the female section of the population that joined us. On entering the coach, she did not hesitate to introduce herself as Mrs. M. D.

Dressed in rusty black and possessed of a parchment-like skin, she let loose a flood of most broken English, addressed indiscriminately to one or the other of her two fellow-travellers. She was forty, scraggy, restless-eyed, demonstrative, volatile, active, and most conversational. Her brows were perpetually arched up into an expression of comicality, her mouth travelled sideways occasionally until it nearly reached her left ear, her hands were unceasingly waving in all directions to express all that she could not find time to interject between her sentences, and the road here being very rough, the greater part of her oration, wit, sallies, and screaming mirth was delivered alternately in the air and on the coach seat. It is needless to say that the drollness of the continual babble, uninterrupted by the bobbing about of the lady's body, was irresistible. She poured out blithely into our unwilling ears the account of the death of her husband three months before from typhoid fever, supplementing the description with the most gruesome details. Her deepest family secrets resounded untrammelled in the rocking coach, and for the next hour she was engaged in confiding to us many particulars and incidents; for instance, how the Heidelberg people chaffed her in none too delicate a fashion on her kindly relations with "Thompson" the barman, this

being repeated *in extenso* as a great joke no less than four times ; how Thompson was cheeky and jealous of other gentlemen who spoke to her (which she considered he had no right to be), how she had given him the "sack." Then, again, how her Zulu "boy" stole things, and how an exciting incident occurred in which she appeared as a heroine, firing her revolver (which she regularly carried) over the heads of some Zulus who stopped her ; how she had just found some poisonous snakes in her bedroom and had killed them. But the cream of all her jokes, she considered, was the following one, which she related no less than six times, amidst shrieks of laughter. A night or two before, one of the coach drivers slept there. In the late evening she presumed so far upon his kindness as to give him the baby to put to bed in the inner bedroom. The room was dark, and after he had entered, groping his way with the little one in front, she heard a great fall, and some awful oaths. She told us she hated swearing and would not permit it in her house, and so shouted, "What the —— are you talking like that for?" The man came out and began to use her roughly, finally sending her into the same room to look after the poor infant. She took three paces in, and crash she fell also, full swing, into a bath with twelve inches of water

in it. The poor baby had gone in too, and was dripping though not hurt. This trifling incident was not sufficient to disturb her equanimity, however, or her readiness of resource, for calling Thompson she told him to go into the inner room to fetch her something. Thompson growlingly complied, for he was innocent and knew not—when crash, bang, the bath receives him too, the “langwidge” resulting being almost sufficient to blow the roof off. Poor Thompson! It was the last straw; he had borne this lady’s society for three months, but the bath proved to be too much for him!

At Heidelberg we hear ominous news as to the rivers, the recent heavy rains having swollen them greatly. Usually they are easily forded by coach and team, but it was jokingly told us that we should have to swim them. Arrived at the river bank, we saw a wide and rapid stream, obviously impossible for the coach to cross; however, on the opposite bank reposed another “American” coach in all the ridiculous majesty of its ornamentation, and the practical usefulness of its material and construction. We and the mails were ferried over by a stalwart young Boer, gruff and uncommunicative, whose knowledge of English was confined to the use of the word “shilling,” which, with the extended palm, however, was quite sufficient indication of his





CROSSING THE ZUKERBOSCHRAND.



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Figure 1. The figure shows four small, square, black and white photographs arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each photograph shows a close-up of a textured, possibly metallic or stone, surface with some dark, irregular shapes. The images are labeled 1, 2, 3, and 4 in the bottom right corner of each respective image.

desires. The operation of getting the team over was interesting; the two leaders, horses, were attached by a line to the ferry and swam across without difficulty, then the eight mules by dint of a great amount of exercise, yelling, and whip on the part of the drivers, were by degrees forced down to the water's edge, finally, with immense splashing and fighting, made to face the swift current, in a few minutes joining their dripping leaders.

Our next river, commonly known as the "Waterfall," was a more serious one to encounter. Since early morning it had risen twenty feet, the current was very swift, and this time even the team had to be left behind. The mails were placed in a small boat, and the suddenness and swiftness with which it was caught by the rush of the water and swirled down stream, was watched with feelings of personal interest by the small knot of passengers on the bank, now increased in number by a Dutch family of five. However, nine persons, including the oarsmen, trusted themselves to the small, frail craft, and the banks noiselessly rushed past us. By dint of hard pulling for a few minutes, we swept into a backwater and pulled up the stream along the opposite bank. On climbing the bank we surveyed our new conveyance and team, indeed it took us a little to realise that it was intended for

such. Instead of horses or hardy mules we saw a double row of bullocks, ten in all, lazily whipping the flies off their flanks ; in place of our commodious coach was a long vehicle, which was completely covered in, saving the end, and had ledges on either side for the accommodation of baggage. The floor was four feet above the ground, and this proved a necessary provision. However, the distance to be traversed before we should reach the next river and a team of mules was but seven or eight miles, and as our prospects of reaching Standerton, our resting-place for the night, or part of it, were rather blue, those poor bullocks were made to put their best feet foremost. By dint of frequent use of the whip and an energetic application of the Boer driver's vocabulary, they took us along at a great speed, calling forth a wonderful exhibition of skill on the part of the excellent lady in shielding her infant from the shocks and bumps sustained by all else. The next river, Bushman's Spruit, after much hesitation and doubt, it was decided to ford, and accordingly our bullocks were put to it. When the leaders had entered they soon had to swim, the depth of water being fully four feet. Our coach bumped across the stony bed, the water rising right up to the floor, and apparently at one moment threatening to invade the interior. By this time,

however, the leading bullocks had regained a footing, though the nearer ones were swimming, and the moment of suspense was therefore short.

In the course of the next few miles we found an intelligent and instructive companion in the Dutch gentleman who had joined us. Head of the Dutch School at —, he was a man of considerable culture and wide reading, and here a wide distinction must be drawn between burghers of recent Dutch extraction and the Boer pure and simple. Imbued with profoundest patriotism, yet with feelings of completest friendship towards England, he formed an excellent example of the younger, more enlightened portion of the nation, which is, as these words are written, becoming more and more felt in the national councils; and while the rugged strength of the old voortrekker will doubtless continue to exist as a valuable backbone in the national character of the Boers, we may hope and believe that the softening influences of old world culture and refinement, from which they have been so long cut off, may become so grafted with this force of character as to form a vigorous and healthy combination in the interest of humanity and civilisation.

We sample the Boer tobacco which our companion carried, and of which we had heard much. In appearance it resembles a very inferior tea, and

the taste for smoking it is decidedly an acquired one, yet it is a fact that by far the greatest number of Englishmen who have been for some time resident in South Africa not only smoke it, but ever after refuse the doctored leaf smoked in England. It is grown extensively in many districts, but the best comes from the Magaliesberg range, some distance west of Johannesburg. This experiment led to the presentation of an interesting gift, a connecting link with the making of the nation. It consisted of a fur tobacco pouch, which had belonged to the Bezuidenhout who has been before referred to. The grandson of this man was determined to act up to the traditions of his family, and doubtless inherited a sense of wrong and oppression ; for it was he who, in the market-place of Pretoria, during an attempted sale of the belongings of a non-tax-paying farmer, gave the signal for rebellion, and commenced that bloody and disastrous war.

The sun sets over the veldt, mysterious in its dimly-lit immensity, and we are suddenly shocked to a prosaic awakening to the grim facts of life by the entrance to Standerton being prefaced by the worst piece of travelling we had so far encountered. It seems to us that each wheel alternately passes over huge boulders and descends into jerky depths ;

tossed hither and thither, we narrowly escape forming one unhappy collection of bruised anatomies on the floor. One boulder in particular is negotiated by our off hind wheel and is nearly responsible for a broken leg, indeed our driver comfortingly assures us that it is a good thing we are in the old style coach and not in the saloon, or we should have been over to a certainty.

Thank goodness, Standerton at last ; a meal and bed. Can the heavenliness of the latter be realised by anyone who has not experienced a first coach journey? The joy of it is damped, be it said, by the knowledge that we shall have to turn out at 2.30 to continue our way, and by a nameless fear. This fear is realised by one, for, having undressed and ventured 'twixt the bedclothes (his companion resting clothed, with an overcoat as covering, as a consequence of having travelled before), he awakes in the dead of night and jumps out of bed in raving delirium and high fever. Here is a serious predicament and an anxious responsibility ; we are in the midst of a journey through an unfamiliar country, are strictly tied to time, and yet one's companion is down perhaps with camp fever or some unknown illness.

Morning arrives, and little consolation with it, for the patient is yet in a great fever and weak and

exhausted. However, it is determined to proceed, and the biting cold of the early morning hours are employed by one in preventing the half-senseless, recumbent form of the other from being thrown about by the remorseless bumping of the cart. Such devotion were worthy of a more heroic *dénouement*. By the time the sun has risen high in the heavens the patient is well, and is fain to confess that he has been suffering from a severe attack of what we learn later to be Standerton's greatest commodity.

We had passed over the broad Vaal, by means of a fine bridge on leaving Standerton, and about eleven see the Majuba Hill, grim monument to a story of folly, misgovernment, and disaster. We are now in a valley, hemmed in by hills, the spurs and shoulders of the great Drakensburg range. Their sides are burning in many places, and at their feet graze huge herds of cattle. Here we see a wagon with out-spanned team grazing calmly by, while human bipeds, black and white, make a roof of the wagon and a house between the wheels. Roads converge from many directions, and teams grow increasingly numerous as we proceed. One wagon has sunk up to its axles in the boggy ground, for it is here a notoriously bad road, and we wait to see forty-six well-thrashed oxen lend

their strength and weight to extricating it from its position.

We arrive at the "Gates of Natal," which announcement seems an absurdity with all the vast frontier unbounded on either hand; nevertheless it is the fact, and we pass the enclosure and the customs examination without delay, to discover that but two hours or so will elapse before the train starts, and the second division of our journey begin. Since our journey the railway has superseded the coach, and it is now unnecessary to change one's seat between Durban and Johannesburg.

Here is "civilisation" again, though of somewhat a barbaric kind. Hindoo shops and Hindoo people are conspicuous, and occasionally a half-clad Kaffir lady from the kraals on Majuba's lofty sides strolls leisurely past. The change from the Transvaal is instantaneous. One cannot help feeling one is on English soil, and that freedom and fearlessness of wrong being done them exist amongst the "indigènes" in a way which we never noticed in the Transvaal.

In our car we mount the very shoulders of Majuba, and must have crossed the path taken by our hapless soldiers previous to the battle. Some hundreds struggled up the steep mountain sides on that memorable night, unhappily taking no gun

with them, the difficulties of ascent being too great. Daylight broke and found them unentrenched, and their arms stacked in the hollow of the top. The Boers, only seventy in number, according to one of our Boer informants, surprised them, taking advantage of every bit of cover afforded by the numberless boulders scattered over the hill, and with the accuracy gained by life-long experience of the misleading atmospheric effect and by hunting the swift bok, to say nothing of the use resulting from constant practice with firearms even in early childhood, every bullet went home, and our soldiers, new to the country, were shot down, to use the gleeful expression of one of the Boer participants afterwards, "like so many springbok." It is said that the commanding Boer general on seeing the British force on the hill, almost gave the order to evacuate his position, but mustering his men, told them that God was on their side and that of liberty, and would surely deliver the enemy into their hands, calling then for volunteers to attack the position as a forlorn hope. It is confidently asserted, and even admitted by us, that seventy men responded to this call and made the attack, though they were later joined by others, and at the end of the fight but three of them were missing. This seems almost incredible, but when one comes to think of these

men, accustomed to Zulu warfare and with their natural advantages, the cover afforded them, the accuracy of their aim, the unexpectedness of their attack and the panic our men were thrown into, it is perhaps not so incredible, especially when one takes into consideration the unpreparedness of our force. As many were killed, so the story goes, by falling over precipices in the mad rush for life as by Boer bullets, and the fact that the majority of the rifles afterwards picked up were sighted for four hundred yards, whereas most of the shooting was done at two hundred, may account at least partially for the small loss on the Boer side.


The whole story of this expedition, in which the terrible reverse of Laing's Nek (which we shortly afterwards pass) forms part, is one of unmitigated bungling and national disgrace.

The Transvaal, as things are tending now, must sooner or later assert and consolidate the position it has taken amongst the countries of the world, either independently or in conjunction with the English South African colonies. When this transformation will effectively come depends largely on the extent of the gold deposits, for so long as these hold out, so long will be the epoch of the greatest influence of European stimulus and consequent rapidity of progress. If these fail within an appre-

cial time, of which there is not at the present the remotest indication, indeed the reverse seems assured, the stream of push, energy, and capital will flow elsewhere, the Boers will be left more to develop their undoubted minor resources on their own account, and, from the essential character of the conditions, the process of growth will be slow and uncertain. Much depends, too, on the moral character of the growing state. Will the selfish prejudices of former isolation and ignorance colour its peaceful relations, and the relics of semi-barbarism be more apparent in its warfare, or will noble, broad-minded, and enlightened results be evolved out of the present confusion of opposing influences? Here is a new country with certain strong, forcible impulses and traits of character. Can it not in its growth and self-constitution, with the history and experience of nations before it, show the world some advancement on the methods of the old civilisation, bound down and trammelled by the bondage of ancient custom and inherited ideas? The Transvaal has a great and promising infancy, but it must cast away its swaddling clothes of savagery.

The war of 1880-81 showed vividly the demoralising effect of these influences. The most sacred principles of civilised warfare were in several

instances contemptuously disregarded, and a calculating and cruel remorselessness exhibited which would have raised the envy of the most bloodthirsty native chief. At Bronkhorst Spruit, the place where the first overt act of war occurred, a small detachment of British troops fell into a cunning ambush, and as soon as, if not earlier, the parley between commanding officers and a single Boer had ended, every stone in front and rear and all around seemed to belch forth death, the officers being specially picked out and the first to fall. In a few minutes one hundred and thirty out of a total of two hundred and fifty soldiers were slaughtered or wounded by the unseen enemy, the individuals of whom had actually gone the length of pacing the distance between their particular shelter and the intended position of the victims. Even the ambulance containing the wounded was subjected to their fire, and after this simple massacre, horses were refused the two soldiers who were released on parole to get, for the succour of the wounded, the medical assistance some thirty miles away. Then again, the cold blooded murder of one of the officers taken on this occasion and afterwards ostensibly ordered to be released. He was shot in the back by his guards just as he was endeavouring to cross the river into the Free State.



As a further instance may be cited the utter inhumanity of forcing the English prisoners in one town to line the trenches actually under the fire of British troops—and many other atrocities perpetrated by Boers, who, after the strong representations of the British Government at the termination of the war, were put through a form of trial, only to be acquitted or nominally punished, but gaining at the same time the plaudits and honour of their fellow countrymen. All this shows that we were fighting with men who were Kaffirs at heart, at least so far as feelings of humanity were concerned, and that the treachery and cruelty of the pagan black man had become deeply engrained in them. It is far from the purpose of these lines to include in these strictures the enlightened men who are now engaged in uplifting their countrymen, though it might be added that without doubt those then at the head of affairs would stoutly profess their ignorance of such occurrences, and the authors of them would find some suitable text of Scripture which would amply justify their action; after all, then, can we have much to grumble at?

Considering all these facts, and its consistent attitude on the native question, it is justifiable to say that before the South African Republic can consider it has a right to be deemed an agent in

the advancement of civilisation, it will have to seize every opportunity to demonstrate that it has emerged from this dark cavern of horror, and to purge itself of the inexcusable and abominable acts committed, aye, and even defended, in the sacred name of patriotism.

That the first opportunity has, in fact, been seized, is evidenced by the fact that in the recent conflict at Krugersdorp between a jaded force of the British South Africa Company under Dr. Jameson and a number of Boers strongly posted in an almost impregnable position, considerable humanity and kindness was shown to the surrendered and almost starving troopers, and also that great magnanimity was, later on, shown by the government in the treatment of the Johannesburg "Reformers" who had rendered themselves liable to heavy punishment. This is, perhaps, a strong indication that already the Transvaal Boers desire not only to destroy the bad impression caused by some events of the late war, but also to show an example of moderation, even during the natural heat engendered by a conflict which was forced on them in a time of peace and in defence of their country.

The danger to be clearly seen and avoided is that, in eradicating a strong though undesirable element in the character of an individual or a nation, great

risk is incurred of destroying its strength and individuality, in fact, of emasculating it--the tamed savage is often a miserable caricature of his former self, for his ideas and restraints have been destroyed, and he can neither comprehend nor realise those which are put in their place. Even the Transvaal, with its far-away traditions of European civilisation, is in some degree subject to the same risk, and must provide for it or run great danger of falling.

CHAPTER V.

NATAL: THE SOUTH AFRICAN GARDEN.

OUR passengers on the train are an extraordinary "mixture." We here come across the imported coolie element for the first time, as, though their numbers continually increase, there were comparatively few at Johannesburg. The Zulu in Natal flourishes to such an extent under British rule, has so few wants and next to nothing to do to live, as his wives cultivate his food, that he will not stir a finger to work, and the cost of labour consequently was at one time very high. The experiment of bringing coolies from India at a fixed rate and for a specified time was made, and has proved a great success in this respect, they being employed almost exclusively as labourers on the line. These labourers are by no means attractive looking; thin, diminutive, sparsely dressed, and filthy, they form a striking contrast to the dignified Zulu. As we walk the length of the train, the third-class carriages are crowded with a wild-looking, chat-

tering rabble, which we are not sorry to lose later on. At Charlestown our eyes are attracted by a Zulu woman, evidently of some importance ; of an imposing and dignified air, beautifully (in Zulu eyes) fat, and with a face and demeanour eminently business-like and resourceful ; she is worthy of attention as a typical Natal Zulu of the better class. Her dress evidently consists of no more than is usual when in her own people's resorts, though a blanket loosely thrown over one shoulder and fastened there, reaching nearly to the knee, forms some sort of concession to insular prejudices. Her sleek neck is adorned with an elaborate necklace of beads, and many bangles on her ankles and wrists jingle as she moves.

Our train commences to descend as we traverse Majuba's shoulders, rounding the mountain and beginning the journey through lovely Natal ; as we progress, the descent grows faster and more furious, sharp curves are dashed round, and distant landmarks change their bearings with such rapidity as to prevent any idea of one's direction being held for two consecutive minutes. The question of speed may be due partly to a revulsion of feeling caused by the immense contrast between the slow, tedious, and rough coach journey just ended and the comparatively smooth road of iron. The very

atmosphere of the place is instinct with activity—one feels one is on British soil, and rejoices in the stimulus.

The most noticeable feature at this stage is the presence of numerous native kraals dotted about the hills, and resembling a collection of bee hives. As



MOURNFUL MAJUBA.

we pass near them we observe little black youngsters, innocent of clothing, gazing wonderingly at the train and sometimes scampering back to the huts. Large patches of growing maize are often in proximity to the huts, and here we see

many of the women of the household, naked to their waists, laboriously hoeing and cultivating the ground.

Here we come face to face with a condition of things of which we only see the remotest relic in Europe, *i.e.*, the arrangement whereby the part of the wife is to do the daily work of bread winning, whereas that of the husband is to protect her in so doing, and also, as a soldier of the state, to fight for its honour and its precedence. The Zulu in Natal lives an ideal life, save that there is no fighting for him; still, this part of Natal is on the frontier, and is practically Zululand, where he may think there are always possibilities; he has easy possession of land, and numerous wives to till it for him, to prepare his daily food (mainly maize) and his queer-tasting drink. He smokes and whiles away his lazy day, and in the evening perhaps takes his characteristic bullock hide shield and knobkerry or assegai to make a semblance of a demonstration with his brethren.

Nothing helped us so thoroughly to realise the true nature of our surroundings as an incident of that evening, when at the side of the line we slowly passed a band of about twenty naked warriors making their peculiar hop forward under cover of their shields, shaking their sticks and rending the

air with awe-striking yells, hurling defiance at the invader. While now quiescent in Zululand, having tasted bitterly of the power of the white man, we imagine that deep in those black breasts may be nursed an unceasing hope that some day a new Chaka will arrive who will drive his enemy from his hardly-won country.

The Zulu is a fine race, the finest race in Africa, south of the equator at least. Though naturally strong and warlike, it was not until a warrior, in the shape of the son of a minor chief, arose that they exerted any overwhelming influence; but Chaka, being exiled by his father on account of his prowess and popularity, took a hint or two from English military methods, elaborated a scheme of organisation, and, on the death of his whilom protector, put it in force with such strictness, severity and success, that all the elements of manhood were concentrated into one engine of destruction. Every able-bodied man, of course, was a warrior, the ties of home and family were destroyed and celibacy enforced—failure in battle meant death to commanders and commanded, and the slightest hesitation, though in face of seemingly certain death, meant capital punishment afterwards. By wholesale executions he rid himself of opposing parties, and, like many an ancient

prototype, built up a kingdom on a foundation of corpses. What would Napoleon have thought after 1815 had he been told that his genius having left him (as it appeared to have done), in those far-off latitudes, had entered into the soul of a heathen, continuing its devilish and devastating progress in the southern hemisphere as it had done in the northern?—for Napoleon's fall and Chaka's rise almost coincided. For twenty-five years Chaka ruled with an iron hand and an iron heart; victory and bloodshed occurred on a scale unparalleled even in Africa, and when he met his death, at the hand of his brother, he died ruler of an enormous empire, and left behind him a powerful, united nation instead of an impotent collection of clans. The impress of that mighty mind remains to this day, and was evidenced with awful emphasis at Isandhlwana and in the system and gallantry shown during the war. The murderer of Chaka was in turn murdered by his brother Dingaan; indeed, this appears to be the favourite, albeit involuntary, mode of death on the part of Zulu chieftains, for few, including Cetewayo, who it is believed by many was poisoned, have escaped the assassin's hand.

Antecedent to Dingaan's reign, who, though not of Chaka's calibre, was a man of strong and warlike character, several branches of the Zulu nation were

formed by the armies of generals, who, having been unsuccessful or disobedient, feared to return to the wrath of their chief and certain death, so prepared to strike out a kingdom for themselves. One of these proceeded far north to the shores and districts of Nyassa and Tanganyika, where, a missionary of the district tells us, they now unceasingly raid their weaker neighbours, committing untold atrocities, whilst another, on Chaka's death, proceeded through the Transvaal, whence the early Boers drove them, to the north of the Limpopo, conquering and depopulating, where it formed the famous Matabele nation, to be dealt with later on. What with wholesale private executions and the enormous bloodshed in war, it will become evident that polygamy was absolutely essential for the nation's existence; but the Spartan rule appears to have also had a lasting effect on the morality of the people. No doubt the Zulu code might appear strange in some particulars, but, having set up a code, it is unswervingly adhered to; in fact, it is doubtful whether there exists a nation in the world so true to its laws; punishment certainly is stringent and far reaching, but its efficacy is such that illegitimacy, for instance, practically never occurs. The detail and reason of their laws and the intricacy and strictness of their ceremonials seem to point

to an origin superior to that of any of their neighbours, and in some of their customs there is a distinct trace of Semitic influence ; it is held by many that their origin is northern.

It was Dingaan's soldiers whom the Boers met with in their first occupation of the Transvaal, it was he whom they conquered and deprived of Natal and his throne, the latter country having already been placed under British protection, only to be driven out by the British themselves after a desperate resistance. Here comes the story of gallant Mr. King, whose son we met, and whose deed has become an honoured tradition of the colony. Hard pressed by the foe, at Durban, a handful of British soldiers were on the point of being vanquished, this meaning the loss of a promising and beautiful country to England, and probably a dreadful captivity or perhaps even death to them. No help was at hand, the nearest assistance being at Port Elizabeth, 700 miles away, through the enemy's lines and over country thirsty and wild, populated by fierce and hostile natives, by whom scant mercy would be given the solitary Englishman should he fall into their hands. Nevertheless, during eight days of hardship unparalleled, he rode for the lives of his comrades, two days more being taken up by sickness, reaching Port Elizabeth half dead, but in

time to save Durban by the despatch of a relieving force by sea. King's ride is one of the most exciting of the stormy annals of this young colony (for it was only in 1841 that we fought there first), and it now forms the subject of many a Christmas story and poet's muse.

The history of Natal, so far as the relations between black and white are concerned, has been a singularly untroubled one; the black population consists mainly of refugees, and also of those who, having become rich, say, in Zululand, were therefore the more uncertain of life and property. Under the British flag, they enjoy complete safety, and, it is believed, appreciate the fact thoroughly; many have become exceedingly prosperous.

Looking back over the history of the last twelve years, so far as England's relations with the Transvaal and Zululand are concerned, one cannot but be impressed by the singular ineptitude displayed in the English policy and government. In the first place, it is doubtful whether the Boers as a body ever desired annexation by England, and they certainly proved their dislike of the arbitrary, tactless, semi-military rule of the English officials. Secondly, it is quite certain that the result of putting an immense strain on the friendliness of Cetewayo by forbidding him to attack the Boers when they were

at his mercy, was to bring upon us two bloody wars, with terrible loss of life and treasure.

To comprehend the situation, it must be understood that Dingaan, having betrayed and massacred a party of Boer envoys and another party of 700—men, women, and children—the Boers shortly after joined hands with Panda, a jealous and powerful chieftain, and defeated Dingaan, who promptly left the scene, probably aided by a dose of poison or a knife; the throne went to Panda and a large slice of territory (as usual) to the Boers.

However, as years went on, this was not enough for these early colonisers, and Cetewayo, Panda's son and successor, was continually at odds with them, on account of their encroachments. Quite apart from this provocation of the Boers, there was another strong reason why the presence of aggressive neighbours should be held by the Zulu nation not only as a nuisance but also as a fortunate occurrence. A Zulu man was not considered a warrior, nor was he allowed to marry, until he had won his spurs, or, in Zulu terms, "washed his spear in blood"; consequently, the younger portion of the nation had perhaps the strongest possible incentive to see in this contiguity a highly desirable and charming opportunity. Therefore, when the Boers were disorganised, dispirited, and almost bankrupt, having

been signally defeated in attempting to reduce a plucky chief in the north, Sekukuni by name, it was an immense test of this savage chief's loyalty to England to make him plunge his nation into a state of seething discontent by disbanding the thousands of troops he had placed all along the Zulu frontier, ready and fretting to pounce down on their old and relentless enemies, and so to destroy his opportunity of paying off old scores effectively by wiping them out of existence. Only a tyrant *could* have done this, and even Cetewayo could not suppress the awakened spirit of war which had flared up and would only be satisfied by blood. Unhappily, this fell on the British instead of on the Boers. Had Cetewayo been allowed to wreak his own vengeance in the matter, though no doubt it would have seemed inhumane at the time, the Zulu war, resulting through the irritation of disappointment and through Cetewayo's hand being forced by the subsequent contumacy of the Zulu young bloods, would never have happened, while the Boers would have been crippled and only too glad of protection instead of plunging us into the Transvaal war. The Transvaal at this moment owes its very existence to England having stepped in at the critical point of its life, yet, sad to say, as a result of her humanity she was rewarded by her sons being killed by those whom

she had saved, and by the hatred and distrust of a large section of the Boers.

It might be fairly deduced from the above that, Sekukuni having been thrashed by the British on behalf of the Dutch farmers when their own attempts had failed, the threatening power of the Zulus—anxious to avenge Dingaan—having been dissipated, and, in four years of British government, the finances of the country having been re-established, the chestnuts had been pulled out of the fire by the British cat, and the Boer baboon saw no necessity to share them with anyone.

The subsequent capture and exile of Cetewayo, his return under an impossible arrangement of government, in which the nation was split up into thirteen tribal divisions, certainly had its intended effect of rendering the nation impotent as regards aggression, but it also resulted in an intolerable state of anarchy, in the midst of which Cetewayo's son Dinizulu, with two brothers, were exiled to St. Helena as rebels.

To return to our wanderings ; here at the stations we see fresh signs of English life ; instead of apathy there is interest, and at one, bearing the very African name Ingogo, we even see ladies in riding-habits—not that such things are necessarily unknown, even in the distant parts of the Transvaal,

but the sight struck one as peculiarly European after the recent sight of leaping warriors.

At Ladysmith we find our sleeping car and get a meal; half the population seemed to be parading the platform, ranging from tiny coolie lasses, picturesque and pretty in their long, strange gowns, to the representative of England in her muslin frock.

Morning comes and cold it is, for we are yet high above sea level: we are passing along a great height, with a vast area of irregular, rippling, round-topped hill shoulders, grass covered, and undulating from unknown depths in the far distance right up to our feet, separated and intersected by ravines so steep and sloping that, as we rush round their heads and along their sides, it seems that, were our train to be but once lost control of, we might go rolling over, over, over, for a weary eternity.

Tropical vegetation in tangled masses now appears, and grows richer and more abundant as we descend. The lovely banana and tree fern wave their graceful leaves, and palms and bamboos of great size tower in the air. Here grow pineapples, tea, coffee (of a strange flavour), and sugar, to say nothing of immense quantities of maize. Natal is at once the garden of South Africa and its most healthy and agreeable part; only on the coast line and in spots like Pietermaritzburg is the heat

intense, and if a perfected English climate is to be got anywhere it is surely in the mountains here. A single drawback to farming is the occasional visitation of heavy hailstorms, often very local, but of great intensity; the hailstones are sometimes enormous and descend with immense force, even penetrating corrugated iron roofs.

Up on the Umgeni River, some way from Howick, are beautiful falls, which in their perpendicular leap of 250 feet eclipse Niagara; but these are insignificant when compared with those of the Tugela, far up in the fastnesses of the wild Drakensburg mountains, where the broad waters of a mighty stream are precipitated in one unbroken sheet, making a perpendicular fall of no less than 1862 feet.

As the morning sun gets high and we approach the coast, having skirted the lovely town of Maritzburg, the seat of government, during the night, the heat increases greatly, and a glimpse of the landlocked and forest-edged harbour of Durban gives promise of the luxuries of a swim, though this takes place in the excellent swimming bath in the town and not in the ocean home of the sea-wolf.

For a proper realisation of the desirability of luxury and laziness one must spend a short time (a day is sufficient for the purpose) in a town where the

heat is such that the slightest movement from one's chair in the shade, or even less, means a bath of perspiration; where even the mere sound of a ripple or splash of water is a welcome factor of the provision for modifying the temperature, and yet where every resource exhausted leaves one uncomfortable and uncooled. Here, in the Royal Hotel, our apartments, with mosquito-netted beds (for these terrors are pestiferous), open on to a square shaded by the luxurious foliage of climbing plants, and our ears are refreshed by the welcome sound of cooling fountains.

We walk through the park, with its varied collection of tropical trees, view the fine architecture of the Parliament buildings, and occupy ourselves in studying the varied types of God's noblest work who here present themselves in unsophisticated naturalness. It is wonderful how quickly these untaught, though keen-witted creatures measure the meaning of the harmless looking "Kodak;" it is their belief that the spirit of the unfortunate victim of the photographer's art enters into the picture, leaving him to die a lingering death. How can one wonder at such a belief in a people whose faith in the medicine man and the witch finder even now holds? As a consequence, the mere adjustment of the "Kodak" often leads to shrieks, mingled with the

laughter of others, and the scattering of ebony groups.

Durban is proud of its beautiful situation and its suburbs. A drive round the Berea, as the high ground to the north of the town is called, shows them to be simply lovely; flowering shrubs and trees are gorgeous, and the bush, reaching to the roadside, seems impenetrable. It is whispered that snakes are numerous and huge boa-constrictors not absolutely unknown. Here and there we pass a group of Zulu girls, homeward bound to their hilly homes, and at a wayside inn we often notice coolies, for it is not forbidden them, as it is the Kaffirs, under heavy penalties to the vendor, to buy intoxicants.

The native question, as will have been gathered from previous pages, is one of real and growing difficulty to the country. Now that the Kaffirs are not decimated by war, nor families exterminated by the jealousies of kings or rivals, the black population is increasing enormously, evidencing a vitality quite unknown in the aborigines of other parts of the world, such as North America and New Zealand.

Even now they outnumber the white population by probably ten to one, there being about 400,000 of them in Natal, all of whom need land for cultivation and pasture; indeed, it certainly looks as if "Africa

for the Africans" were bidding fair to become an accomplished fact some day, so far as Natal is concerned.

Reluctantly we end our visit, and in the early morning board the tender which bears us out to the great white "Scot" lying peacefully at anchor on the blue waters of the bay.

Our passengers differ from those outward bound; instead of the invalid travelling to recruit his health, or the young man starting to seek his fortune, we see brown and stalwart men, one with a well-used rifle in his hand, some from far up country with tales of fresh mines of wealth in the districts of the Matabele country. Amongst these companions of our homeward voyage is Captain Borrow, who, alas, met with a hero's end in Matabeleland.

One of Chaka's chiefs, Moselekatse (Umselegazi) by name, broke away from the Zulu nation with his following, marching northward and establishing himself in the region between the Limpopo and the Zambesi, and bounded by Portuguese East Africa on the east. These cut-throats persistently raided the industrial Mashonas, committing countless atrocities and slaughtering wholesale. The Mashonas are expert workers in metal, and the Matabele, not being versed in the arts of smelting iron and manufacturing assegai and spearheads, kept themselves in

stock of these too necessary articles and of cattle by putting their owners beyond the need of them. The result is that the disposition of the Mashonas has been somewhat shy and retiring, with a tendency to dwell on almost inaccessible hilltops. Moselekatse joining the great majority, his son Lobengula took his place, and also the precaution of removing nearly all his relatives to a calmer sphere, so that none could pretend to a better right to the throne. Lobengula appears to have been a man capable of learning a thing or two. He fully comprehended the value of goldfields and of rifles, his demands for the latter having been occasionally wholesale and ungratified. Though circumstances in the end proved too strong for him, he probably also understood the advantage of keeping on good terms with the British South Africa Company, which now rules this enormous tract of country, and until the end of 1893 kept punctiliously to all his engagements, showing some amount of foresight in doing so, for he probably recognised what an African King might not necessarily be expected to recognise, namely, that, whether he and his impis wanted it or not, the white man would get his country in the end, however difficult he might make it for them, and then for nothing; so he chose the prudential course and piled up gold, of which he must have had a considerable

land, as he never spent the considerable sums accruing through subsidies and concessions. The British occupation had been one of untold good so far, as it had to a great extent checked the raids formerly so common—this by treaty with the fat and unattractive visaged though dignified potentate; but the propensity was too deeply engrained to be entirely cured, as was seen by the raid on a Mashona chief in the neighbourhood of Victoria by an impi (regiment) of Matabele 2000 strong, resulting in the death of large numbers of the attacked, whose offence was nominally cattle stealing. It is probable that Lobengula found himself much in the same position as that of Cetewayo before the Zulu war, namely, that his young bloods grew impatient under restraint, and forced his hand by menacing his crown; indeed, it is a matter of common knowledge that his young men for some time previously openly defied him, and caused the serious developments which took place.

The discovery of gold in the country is probably due to Mr. H. Hartley—about 1866—who saw abundant evidences that his discovery was one made many centuries before, in the countless and extensive ancient workings. The Tati gold mines in Matabeleland afterwards started, though now successful,

failed in their earlier days, probably through lack of capital and the counter attraction of Kimberley, which opened up a few years later, and it is during recent years only that serious work has been done in prospecting for and developing the undoubtedly wealthy and numerous goldfields in other districts of Rhodesia. It was only in 1890 that a picked force of seven hundred experienced men, well officered, was sent by the British South Africa Company to formally take possession of Mashonaland, probably to the great disgust of an unruly section of the Boers, who had been meditating a wholesale "trek," and were only stopped by the mandate of Oom Paul.

This was accomplished most successfully and peacefully, and Fort Tuli, Fort Victoria, Fort Charter, and Fort Salisbury were formed and a good road made. Some of our passenger friends having been members of this force, much was heard of the incidents of its progress, causing an interest in the country, which subsequently led to a visit. To prevent surprise, or, perhaps, rather, to astonish the natives, an electric search-light was brought, which in some cases rather took them aback. However, this effect was never anything save temporary, as the Matabele does not try to enquire into or account for such a phenomenon as "catching the daylight and using it





at night," and simply explains what must be to him the most unheard of thing by a shrug of the shoulders and the words "mad white man!"

The country is highly spoken of by all who know it thoroughly as being, except in certain well-defined localities, healthy and also possessing good scenery; the elevation is great and it is a good pastoral country. There is yet much game about, though, as is the case further south in a more aggravated form, it is quickly becoming rarer. When Mr. Selous first hunted these regions, fifteen or twenty years ago, all sorts of game, from lion to quagga, were to be found in abundance, and lions are yet a source of annoyance.

Rhodesia, which the provinces of Mashonaland and Matabeleland constitute, is attainable either from Kimberley or Pretoria by a long journey by bullock waggon or coach (the latter an expensive method), through the Transvaal or Bechuanaland; but a route has now been made practicable for other than foot passengers from Beira, the fever-den on a sand bank at the mouth of the Pungue river. A strip of "Fly-belt" about ninety miles wide separates Beira from Umtali in Manicaland; across this fly-belt no animal of traction or dog can pass, the bite of the dreaded tsetse fly killing them in six weeks. A railway is now built across this natural

barrier, and a journey, which was at one time only to be taken on foot, may now be done in comparative luxury and in greatly lessened time.

The country abounds, in some districts, with old gold workings, the majority being very shallow though some attain the depth of seventy to a hundred feet. It is also remarkable for its extraordinary problems in the form of prehistoric ruins of peculiar and distinctive character, and hardly to be compared with any other ancient buildings known.

Speculation, of course, is wide afield as to the origin of the astonishing and vast ruins to be seen in various districts, those of Zimbabwe particularly; but one point seems clear—they were built by foreigners in the country, who visited it and lived there in the midst of hostile tribes. The Sabi river would form a natural water route for the strangers, were their origin Phœnician, as indicated by an ingot mould unearthed corresponding with an ingot of tin, undoubtedly Phœnician, found in Cornwall, or otherwise; and that this route was used by them is indicated by the numerous forts built at the same period, which exist on the river banks. Certain it is that antiquarians will have to quarrel a long time before they establish or refute the suggestion that Mashonaland is that part of Ethiopia known of old

as the "Land of Ophir," although we may call it so now

One of the forces which act against the development of Africa is the Portuguese element, as a rule, wherever you have the Portuguese you have the sluggard; unable to develop or make efficient use of the territories they occupy, they are the greatest drags to civilisation wherever they have a footing. For hundreds of years they held a nominal possession of parts of the continent north of Zululand, including Delagoa Bay; but their authority, until comparatively lately, practically never extended beyond a few miles of the coast and a few trading centres up the rivers, or not much beyond the sentry lines of their expeditionary forces. Recently they have to some extent asserted themselves by having, after a prolonged struggle, reduced Gungunhana, a powerful chief in Gazaland, to submission. The Chartered Company's soldiers, amongst whom were one or two of our friends, had two brushes with them in the early days, which proved rather serious—for the Portuguese.

Salisbury, the seat of Government, only three years after its occupation had, during the season, a population of probably four hundred whites; it even then boasted of some excellent houses, a most flourishing turf club, with an entrance fee of fifteen

guineas and a prize list of considerable value. The usual concomitants of society were present, and it was even whispered that, though the lady inhabitants were certainly not more than a dozen in number, society lines were drawn with great severity, even under such restricted circumstances.

However, of Rhodesia as it is, more anon.

CHAPTER VI.

OSTRACISED IN AFRICA.—HOME WITH THE SWALLOWS.

WE regret to hear, shortly after leaving Durban, where "M. — the Fool" shouted farewells to the "*homeward-bounders*," as he facetiously termed us, that our doctor is ill. Little do we dream what that little item of news portends.

The journey to East London is not of any particular interest ; fortunately, it is not long, and we are there on the following morning, lying out at sea and engaged in taking aboard from lighters never-ending bales of wool and dried, nasty-looking hides. There being but little time to spare, none venture ashore, and the time is passed monotonously, the continual drone of the officer's voice counting and taking the marks of the bales and the perspiring self-importance of the Kaffir labourers becoming painfully dreary.

Be this as it may, it is preferable to the experience we are subjected to later, for the "Scot" being the finest vessel of the Union line, she is a centre of

interest to various people from shore, who, to the number of about a hundred, come aboard, suffering from the effects of the rough passage in a small tender, investigate cabins without the slightest regard for the privacy of the occupants, overrun and dominate the entire ship, and in many cases show their appreciation by leaving their dinners on the deck. The departure is watched with feelings of grim and satisfied amusement, for the tender's bobbing sides are lined with humbled and dishevelled mortals.

Port Elizabeth gives us a hot and windy welcome, the fierce wind catching up the finer gravel in the streets and cutting it into our faces.

We walk down the long main street with easy consciences and the air of free men *for the last time*, for on the morrow, as we walk up the hill to the charming Port Elizabeth Club House, our Mashona-land companion is stopped by a man on horseback, who exclaims, "Well, so you've just escaped in time!" What dread meaning is conveyed in these words we scarcely dare to enquire, but, on asking the question, the reply, given in light-hearted tones, is: "Small pox has broken out on board the 'Scot,' the doctor and sixteen men are down with it, and she is ordered into strict quarantine." Our dismay may be appreciated when it is understood

that clothes, money, and camera are on board, and the suit of coloured flannels and cap worn by one of us is hardly sufficient or suitable for him to take the voyage back to England in, nor can it be done with only three pounds in cash to get to Cape Town. A small, desolate crowd stands on the pier waiting for the tender to take them back to the isolated and ostracised vessel; there flies the hateful yellow flag at her mast head, like a horrid demon of sickness hovering over her, and we say good-bye to our friends, not knowing what experiences are before them, or before us, for that matter.

The news has spread like wildfire round the town; hotels will have none of us; we are told that the police were after us, and that we shall be put in the lazaretto, subjected to untold horrors in the way of fumigation, and perhaps isolated and quarantined on land for three weeks. We prowl about Port Elizabeth for some time, feeling as if every man's hand were against us and as if every soul looked at us askance. There is really some reason for all this trepidation, as recollections of 1884 had impressed everyone with horror, and caused the possible outbreak of another epidemic to be regarded with intense apprehension; our names, too, were known. and we were readily "spotted" as "Scot" passengers.

It will be easily realised, therefore, that we unfortunate travellers are in a painful fix ; thoughts of flying inland to Uitenhage to find a night's lodging enter our minds, but we come to the conclusion that the usual Nemesis might overtake such fugitives from justice.

Succour comes to us at the hands of the hospitable and kind secretary and members of the Port Elizabeth Club, who, though naturally in some cases with a little searching of heart, undertake the risk, and provide us for the night with a bed, surrounded and impregnated with disinfectants. Our gratitude for the kindness is great, and our anxiety is, in proportion, that it shall not be rewarded by results proving their hospitality to be unwise ; happily, it is to be recorded, this was not the case.

We find that the unfortunate " Scot " has retired to the quarantine ground to the north of the anchorage, with a depressing view of the numerous skeletons of vessels which have at one time or another been driven ashore. She has been joined by a medical man, resident at Port Elizabeth, and a nurse, and it is understood that she has received orders from the sanitary authorities to proceed to Saldanha Bay, a sandy, barren, dead, isolated spot, some eighty miles north of Cape Town, where the unhappy passengers may have to spend at

least three weeks kicking their heels in the hot sand and possibly living under canvas. We shiver a thanksgiving that we are out of it, and the shiver is refreshing.

Our peregrinations in Port Elizabeth lead us to the gardens, which are pleasant after the dust of the wide and rather imposing street, near one end of which is the feather market, a fine hall devoted to that peculiarly South African product.

Cash and some sort of an outfit having been obtained, we arrange to go on to Cape Town by rail, though in doing so we shall have to go right up to De Aar and Naauwport, which we had passed weeks before, nearly half way on the road to Johannesburg. During the first part of our two days' journey there is little of fresh interest save Uitenhage, a very pretty place, celebrated on account of its late intelligent and useful baboon. This baboon belonged to a signalman on the line who had by some means or other sacrificed his lower extremities to the tender mercies of a locomotive, and who consequently was glad of the able and willing services of our cousin (not once, but a hundred times removed, thank heaven). In the morning the baboon placed his trolley on the rails and his master seated himself on it and was pushed luxuriously along to his signal station; when necessary, under his direction, the

baboon pulled the proper lever over on the approach of a train, and at night trundled his master home again. What other kindly and companionable actions this excellent baboon performed are not recorded, though doubtless the ordinary habits and propensities of baboons were turned by his master to some account in the case of this gifted ape.

After passing lovely, tree-shaded Cradock, we nearly get an opportunity of having a practical experience of a Cape thunderstorm. A few hours before a storm had occurred, sending down a deluge of waters in the usual partial and concentrated method, which had swept away a good mile of the railway; this delays us a couple of hours or so, and our train proceeds gingerly over the new-made and not too stable road. Not far off a dense cloud over a small area betokens another downpour, a shower which will make the land swim and fill the deep-cut, worn gullies to their brims in a few moments.

Through the Karoo is an old experience, and it is not until Touws River is reached that we begin to understand what we had missed in taking the first part of our journey from Cape Town to Johannesburg at night. Having come to an understanding with the driver, we seat ourselves on the broad bogie front of the locomotive, our legs dangling contentedly over the "cow-catcher," and a stay in the

middle forming a reassuring support. The sensation on starting is strange and novel; with the wind whistling in our ears and our eyes straight in front, we see nothing of the cause of the speed we were travelling at, but merely objects far in front, growing from small in size increasingly larger, until at last they shoot past us and out of our ken.

We rush downhill ever and ever, the grade appearing severe to our unaccustomed eyes; the cliffs and mountains close in around us as we near the Hex River Pass until it seems as hopeless as a poor madman's problem for us to divine or forecast how our train will escape from its hemmed-in position; time after time an opposing mountain or deep-cut valley seems to cry "Check!" as we shoot suddenly on to it round a corner, only to swerve sharply aside, ready instantly with a solution of the puzzle. The dry, strong air of the mountain, the quick movement and the novelty of the position sets the blood tingling in our veins and fires us with a strange elation.

As we pass round a projection we sometimes run into a nook sheltered from wind, where the still, baked air and rock-radiated heat scorch our faces, dry our skins, and from greed of moisture render it painful and impossible to keep our eyes open. We are travelling over some broken, rocky declivi-

ties, lichen-covered and sparsely bushed, when we both exclaim instinctively, "What's that?" A creature has moved suddenly and silently off the line and mounted the bank; there is something odd and inexplicable about the motion of the being which makes us both speak involuntarily.

The solution is interesting to casual visitors like we, for on our right, some eighty feet below, and scrambling swiftly, easily, and yet with gait most ungainly, is a troop of baboons of all sizes, some four score in number. These creatures are often most mischievous when in proximity to orchards, but sometimes, in spite of their wariness, fall victims to the farmer's rifle. If unarmed, it is policy on meeting these "customers" rather to remove oneself from their neighbourhood than to excite their anger, for there are many instances of fatal encounters with them, their great strength and agility, their clannish combination against a foe, and correctness of aim in stone throwing, rendering them awkward hand to hand antagonists.

Cape Town once more; we frighten our good friends at Seapoint by appearing again amongst them, and even there we feel culprits, as there are distinct signs of restlessness and desire to be going on the part of our fellow visitors, which gives our excellent hostess some reason for uneasiness. One

morning we awake to find the ill-fated "Scot" lying like a ghost in Table Bay, still awaiting instructions. We learn quickly that she is to land her colonial and sick passengers at Saldanha Bay for a three weeks' holiday and will then proceed slowly to England. Happy quarantined ones! Some are Port Elizabeth sight-seers, who had gone aboard at Algoa Bay as their fellows had gone aboard at East London, and who by this experience will be cured for the future of their investigating tendencies so far as ships are concerned, for it will be only after six weeks' absence, and perhaps more, that Port Elizabeth will see them again.

We await the train from Johannesburg due at eleven o'clock in the morning, having detained our ship the "Spartan" for the senior member of our party. The day and then the night drag along, however, without sign of the train, news having come to hand that a "wash away" has occurred on the far side of Kroonstad, which has carried down a large iron bridge and wrecked a train, causing the loss of two precious lives. We are relieved of our anxiety, however, by hearing that the mail train, which had followed that which was wrecked, is safe, and that the only result will be a lengthy detention and a change of trains. The train is seventeen hours late, and it is morning before we

turn in on board our home. The only distraction during this wait was the burning down of a large wing of the station.

The ship is crowded from stem to stern with visitors before we cast off, and as we leave South Africa, and Table Mountain melts into the distant clouds, we cannot but feel that there is much to be expected of and much to be proud of in this vast and important constituent of our Empire; and, not only this, but we realise a feeling of intense satisfaction at having with our own eyes seen and our own feet trod the soil which bears witness to the strength and glory of our own English Nation.

One word might be added before farewell to Africa is said, and that is on the country from the point of view of intending emigrants; one thing is as certain here as it is in every other country, success depends on fitness and exertion. The working man who comes here and expects to find his bread ready buttered never made a more unfortunate mistake in his life. The only men who will get on are those who CAN work, who WILL work, and who will put up with the inconveniences, and perhaps hardships and risks, which they would never have had to face at home. South Africa is no place for the incompetent or the sluggard, neither is it for those who come out, perhaps with capital, but also

with preconceived ideas and with opinions obstinately clung to. In confirmation of this, it may be added that, though there were many third class passengers and emigrants on the way out, yet, equally so were there disappointed men returning home from a land which they had hoped to find flowing with the traditional milk and honey, and yet had found nought but stones ; in some cases blind eyes and indolence, or in others absolute misfortune, having prevented them from discovering the gold which, as a rule, industry and capacity should have laid bare, if one may use such a parallel.

To sum up, it may be said that while the climate is often very hot, it is on the average perfectly supportable ; that wages are high, though the expenses of living are also much higher than they are at home, and that there are always great possibilities before the earnest and intelligent emigrant. Naturally, it is always open to overstock a market, which, rapidly expanding as it is on all hands, still has its limits ; but the fact remains that the country in the future must become a vast outlet for the surplus labour and enterprise of the old country. At the same time, it should be unremittingly borne in mind, that what has to some extent occurred in Australia would be disastrous, namely, that the towns should become enormous cancers, absorbing the labour so needed

to develop the internal resources of the country, and thereby destroy themselves by starving that on which they must eventually depend. This is less likely to occur, however, because the minerals and sources of wealth already opened up and the great chances of the future are distributed far and wide.

Little need be said about the homeward voyage ; many amongst our passengers are strong, self-reliant men, homeward bound after absence since boyhood, with tales of riches in far-away Mashonaland, and documents which will turn to gold stowed in their travelling bags. Tales of encounters with natives, hunting episodes, and forecasts moderately expressed of the glorious future of their adopted country, make the journey home interesting and put a completing touch to it.

Running short of coal, we land at Tenerife, having obtained a grand view of the Peak, and experience a charming interlude in the voyage. The Canary Islands are Spanish, and their volcanic origin is patent and obvious to the most casual observer on every hand. Santa Cruz, the capital, has no very peculiar characteristics, save that its inhabitants appear to subsist mainly by keeping tobacco shops, though, as almost every alternate place appears to be one, it is difficult to see how the demand equals the supply.

Madeira is but twenty-four hours distant, this time viewed in daylight. We now attain some realisation of its beauty. Dotted over the side of its steep slopes are countless villas, white and distinct in the light air against the purple mountain tint; it is yet winter in England, but three days' quick journey away, and magnolias, roses, bananas, coffee, and the sugar cane grow in profusion, linking, apparently, the hardy vegetation of the north with the luxurious, heat-loving plants of the tropics.

We obtain horses and ride up the steep, cobble-paved and narrow streets, to see gorgeous flowers hanging in irrepressible prodigality over the walls, and, as we get higher, vineyards on every side. Arrived at the convent and church of Santa Carmo, we make a short detour, and obtain a grand view over the precipitous valley named the Little Curral, then return to make an exciting descent in that most original institution of Madeira, the wickerwork sledge. The vehicle seats two and is provided with runners; two men steering and controlling the speed from behind, we start, smoothly and slowly, gliding over the slippery cobbles, and propelled by our own weight only, the motion being easy and delightful. Ahead, at some distance, the road turns somewhat, and, as our speed increases, it seems morally certain that our fate will be to be dashed against the wall of

the house opposite, where two or three dark-skinned little ones are enjoying themselves in the dust ; but see, by some invisible action on the part of our steersman, as the corner is reached we turn aside, with an effort, though surely, and continue our shooting descent. Persons cross the road and are warned by the shrill cry from behind us, two or three pack-laden mules, laboriously climbing, press close to the wall as we whiz past them ; but at last it seems that, without fail, a large, laden, ox-drawn vehicle must prove an effectual barrier to our progress in a narrow portion of the road in front, and the sensation of whirling down with a resistless force to a certain, sudden contact with a most unyielding object possesses a peculiar flavour all of its own. By some means, unseen to our eyes, too intent on what is in front, our downward career is made to slacken, and we stop easily and calmly close to the obstruction. Passed, we renew our wild progress, though the straightest line of road now lies behind us ; corners become more numerous, and, finally, shortly before the end, one is reached almost returning on itself, so steep that in turning we tilt up and slip sideways towards the precipitously sloping hill side ; these men gauge it to an inch, however, and, with a turn of the foot on one side and a drag on the other we are twisted round and shortly after

come to the end of our journey breathless and laughing, having covered in ten minutes what took an hour to ascend.

In this charming manner is the journey home from our South African Colony accomplished, and it is well to remember that the colony is but one of several which the energy, enterprise, and adaptability of the British people—to say nothing of the inborn instinct which renders the Briton, be he Celt or Saxon, peculiarly fitted to colonise—have reclaimed from barbarism and raised up as a monument of strength and industry. So long as England shows herself capable of forming offshoots possessing the vitality of the United States (for surely we may claim her as such), Australia, Canada, and South Africa, so long may we rest assured that the sap remains fresh, unvitiated, and vigorous in the grand old tree, and that the day of decay is far away in the distant, unfathomable future.

May a plea be urged in these pages that a closer bond of unity between the "Mother of Nations" and her olive branches, the Colonies, should be formed by a more universal public interest in the daily life, circumstances, and conditions of the peoples who are probably forming the ruling and dominant nations of the future; it is to be remarked as strange that a large, though certainly

diminishing proportion of the people of Great Britain, even in these days of enlightenment, have the most hazy ideas of our "Empire beyond the Seas," and have a very vague and incomplete conception of the fact that practically in every quarter of the globe there are countries as great or greater in extent than England, peopled by Englishmen, each with its own government, its own individuality and character, its own ambitions, trials, and responsibilities, ever bearing onward the banner of civilisation, and testifying in its expansion and success to the honour and glory of Old England. As a first and important step in the desired direction, the directors of our educational institutions should specially include the study of the history and geography of our Colonies in their educational scheme, matters so far almost entirely neglected ; so would they lay the basis of a living interest and sympathy which should be fruitful of great and lasting results.





THE PLEASURES OF TRAVELLING; COACH STUCK FAST IN A "SPRUIT."

PART II
RAMBLES IN RHODESIA

APRIL 1951

DENNIS J. MARRAS, Ph.D.

Pretoria's reality should not be described as a 'shortly existing' situation, but rather as a 'shortly existing' but 'interesting' one.

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PART II.

RAMBLES IN RHODESIA.

CHAPTER I.

EENDRAGT MAAKT MAGT.

PRETORIA really should not be dull, for during its short existence it has been the witness of events both interesting and remarkable.

The scene of the foundation of the Boer government in 1855, of the short-lived annexation of the Transvaal by England in 1877, and of the courageous defence by the British during the Transvaal war—so vividly depicted by Mr. Rider Haggard—it is not long since the eyes of the whole civilised world were concentrated on this peaceful, drowsy village, with a deep-rooted conviction that on the words and actions of its chief citizen and President depended mighty issues. The rising of the Uitlanders in Johannesburg, combined with the entrance into the Transvaal of the Chartered Company's

forces under Dr. Jameson, was the cause of considerable international feeling, and possibly of important modifications in the grouping of European Powers.

Apart from events of such serious character, which happily are not of everyday occurrence, during several months of the year the inhabitants are enabled to witness the playing of what is often a peculiarly laughable comedy in the Raadzaal, or Parliament House. The actors therein are a modern Cromwell and a set of worthy legislators, the majority of whom hold ideas certainly fitted more to the time of William of Orange than to the nineteenth century, and who from that point of view discuss the problems of modern civilisation with limited appreciation, and a sage, pragmatic, assumption of omniscience.

As an instance of the deliberations, which would, if reported, often render the Transvaal Raad the laughingstock of the world, may be cited a debate on the proposed insurance of the Raadzaal building against fire. One member objected to the precaution on religious grounds, his reason being that if it were the Lord's will that the buildings be burnt down it were impious to interfere or provide against it in the remotest degree! Another considered that insurance was a totally unnecessary annual waste of

money in hand, seeing that plenty was always to be obtained from the same source which supplied the funds for the erection of the (really fine) buildings in the first instance. This source presumably is the pockets of the Uitlanders (who contribute about ninety per cent. to the revenue, as compared with the five per cent. of the Boers), and who have to pay enormous taxes on even necessary articles. For instance, the sum of £4 10s. is payable in duty alone on each and every pig imported into the country, and as the Transvaal native is uneatable by persons with any idea of cleanliness, it is scarcely to be wondered at that there is discontent in Johannesburg!

Sometimes, when too hard pressed by an enterprising legislator, or when he fails to get his way, the President will, without more ado, turn his back on the black coated and white tied legislating farmers, and abruptly leave the Raad, thus ending the sitting, and the same treatment, or a curt dismissal, has often been the fate of petitioners from Johannesburg—no matter of what influence—naturally giving them the impression that constitutional means have not much prospect of obtaining reforms, however pressing the necessity for them may be.

But much must be allowed President Kruger in

extenuation, for his is a most difficult position, and he has maintained it so far with remarkable success. On the one hand he has a pushing, restless foreign community, of whose aims and loyalty he probably feels by no means sure, and on the other he has a nation largely composed of men of the narrowest ideas and experience, who cling tenaciously to ancient prejudices and modes of thought, and who would view any concession to the Uitlanders with unconcealed hostility.

Yet Pretoria, with all these advantages for amusement and instruction, *is* dull, even for a Dutch town, and a Dutch town is, as a rule, exceptional in its dullness. Yet it knows how to be pretty in its sleepiness, for trees are abundant and the houses nestle amongst luxuriant foliage. Lying in a basin, and surrounded by kopje bulwarks, it is one of the hottest places in the country, and, by Boers, one of the most easily defended, though if once one of these kopjes, in the defence of which the Boers are proved masters, were to fall into the hands of a hostile force, the town would lie at the mercy of any guns which might be brought to bear.

The most characteristic feature of the town is the great Church Square, on which face the Raadzaal and a few other buildings, which would be considered by no means poor even in Europe. The square is

dusty and uncared for in appearance, and the old Dutch church is dumped down in the middle in, at first sight, a very casual fashion. The church itself appears unkempt and untidy; it is surrounded by a broken down wire fence, the supporting posts of which are rough tree stems; the fence encloses a ragged patch of dusty grass under the walls, plentifully bestrewn with rubbish. This is thoroughly characteristic, and is doubtless partly accounted for by the fact that the great annual religious festival—the *Nachtmaal*—takes place here, and the wagons containing the families, brought tediously from all parts of the country, outspan in the square; the gatherings in the church sometimes exceed two thousand in number.

Pretorians may perhaps be proudest of Church Street, which is a broad thoroughfare with a few fair buildings and a number of "coolie" shops; its principal attraction exists at its lower end, in the form of a very fine avenue of *Eucalyptus* trees of great height and beauty. The bridge over the small river at the end of the avenue is ornamented with well-executed models of lions, and over it, tiny in the distant perspective, may be seen the old church in the square, looking down between the two great lines of trees.

A small but very interesting and well-kept

museum is certainly a credit to the town, and contains many curiosities pertaining to the country and its inhabitants.

From Pretoria start the coach lines communicating with the northern Transvaal and Rhodesia, and it is this fact which has brought me here, for at five in the morning the coach which is to take me to Bulawayo rolls up to find a full complement of passengers awaiting it. The mistake often made in preparing for such a journey is in taking too much baggage, and I find that my gun, Gladstone bag, and camera are likely to prove a considerable source of expense before I land once more at Johannesburg, the rate for baggage for the first five hundred and fifty miles, in excess of the thirty pounds carried free, being one and sixpence a pound.

My sheepskin "kaross" I smuggle in with me, knowing that I shall need it instantly on the starting of the coach, for though it is yet early in the winter, and in shelter the light air is balmy, when once one is exposed to the searching winds over the veldt it becomes cold and bitter.

An indication of what travelling means in a land where the shade of rock or tree is not vouchsafed to relieve the occupants of the sun-baked coach, is given now, when the rush to Rhodesia is so great that seats have to be booked weeks beforehand, and

those unfortunate beings who have been tardy in booking have to be content with the prospect of spending five-and-a-half days and nights clinging to the top of the coach, exposed to the burning heat by day and to the keen cold of the night winds.

My position is not remarkable for its comfort. Shut up with twelve others, three on a seat, I have not even elbow-room; the knees of my *vis-d-vis* are glued against mine, and those of my neighbour behind uncomfortably assert themselves; this certainly has its advantages in some respects, as we are soon to find out, the mutual support enabling us to combat somewhat the wild vagaries of the coach. The man who occupies the middle position on the seat has in one way the best of the situation, for he has no fear of the coach side suddenly reaching over and striking his head, as those to right and left of him have, besides which he is somewhat out of the dust; but on the other hand he has nothing whatever to cling to that he may preserve his balance when the coach negotiates ruts and mounds when going at full speed, and is therefore liable to become a nuisance to his companions at such times!

Our first objective point is the small town of Nylstrom, sixteen hours' journey from Pretoria. The scenery, having once passed through the chain of hills surrounding the metropolis, we find

uninteresting, being of the characteristic southern Transvaal type—rolling veldt, relieved occasionally by scrubby bush. Here and there we pass a Kaffir kraal, sometimes of considerable size, and often, at the various “out-spans,” the native ladies, in all their plenitude of attire, collect to inspect the white curiosities.

Partridges and pheasants are seen in considerable numbers, and a lovely bird, of the kingfisher species, and wonderfully coloured, often makes use of the telegraph wire as a point of vantage from which to observe us.

Considering what Transvaal roads are, the coach travels well; but after sixteen hours, with only a break or two for meals, I begin to feel decidedly the effects of the jolting and unceasing effort to be prepared for and to counteract the sudden movement of the coach.

At Nylstrom we are promised four hours' sleep, and manage to obtain it, albeit we are five in a room, awaking before three in the morning to rush onward under a clear, starlight, but dark night.

How cold it is! Someone grumbles at the amount of room that my sheepskin takes up, but I receive the remark in glum silence, understanding the grumbler's feelings, for his rug is scanty. The seats are like rocks—cold ones—and the wind chills

my face as I lean almost upright against the strap which is the sole support to my back. My fellow travellers' faces can be seen dimly through the darkness and the dust, and the rattle of the coach is only accompanied by the crack of the whip and the cries of the drivers, if one may except an occasional anathema jerked out of some sufferer who has fallen into an uneasy slumber and has made practical acquaintance with some projection.

The scenery now becomes somewhat wilder as we approach the northern part of the country, and there are more manifestations of native occupation. Many fields of Kaffir corn (millet) are passed, often abutting on the road, and sometimes we see a gutta-percha lady shyly peeping at us from among the tall stalks, ceasing for a moment in her work of gathering the corn.

One place of interest we pass is the scene of the murder of one of the brave Boer pioneers, who was caught by the Makatese Kaffirs, flayed alive, tied on an ant-heap for the benefit of the rapacious ants, and exposed to the burning sun ; history does not relate to which stage of the proceedings the poor fellow survived. The Boers took it out of the Makatese afterwards, it is currently believed.

At Pietpotgietersrust, which jaw-cracking name is evolved from that of the unfortunate Boer pioneer,

we have the usual twenty minutes' respite from the torture of the coach in order to lunch, and I there take the opportunity of photographing a group of black ladies, dressed in sunshine, one of whom is engaged at her toilet. Her sweet and swarthy sister, as she gracefully squats on the ground, arranges the ornamental bunches of her short crop with a wooden pin, after having shaved round the forehead and ears, and neatly plaited a very fine line of grass round the border. I find that though some curiosity is manifested (though Kaffirs they are feminine) as to what my proceeding is, they make no attempt to avoid the camera as many would, farther south, in the belief that it would bring some evil to them.

Pietpotgietersrust left behind, we later see in the distance a fresh scene of the barbarous warfare which formed an almost daily experience in the early history of the country. In a cavern on a mountain to the eastward a large party of Kaffirs took refuge with their women and children, after having been hard pressed by the Boers. Declining to trust themselves to the tender mercies of their enemies, who were often smarting under the loss of relatives and friends at cruel hands, the Kaffirs refused to come out, and were finally destroyed by gunpowder being exploded above them, wrecking

their false haven of refuge. Only recently, during the Malaboch campaign, the scene of which we pass next day, dynamite was used for the same purpose, but this time to no effect.

As one regards the rather squat Makatese women, chattering amiably as they bring their baskets of mealies or rice for sale at the stores where we stop to change our team of ten mules, one can fairly imagine their innocent delight had they been born a generation before and their excellent male relatives were engaged in the pastime of baiting us as captives ! One charmer asks me in unmistakeable language, albeit Kaffir, for sixpence, holding out her infant piccanin's hand. This is such a sweet little filthy-headed creature, and as I hold out a sixpence with one hand I grab the baby with the other, causing an instant yell of horror on the part of mamma, and a delighted chorus of laughter on the part of her comrades. She was not so far-seeing as the native lady who insisted that a friend of mine *should* take the infant he had bargained for, knowing that she was sure then of both sixpence and infant !

On a previous occasion I had arrived in Johannesburg at a time of intense excitement amongst the English population, the Boer government having seized the occasion of a protracted war with an unfortunate Kaffir chief named Malaboch in the

Blauwberg mountain now looming ahead of us, to demonstrate the different light in which they held the English residents relatively to Uitlanders of other nationalities. In the early years of the Republic treaties had been made with other nations in which were embodied clauses providing that the subjects of the treaties should not be liable to the process known as "commandeering." Under this process a person may be called upon to give personal service in military operations, and, indeed, hold himself and his possessions entirely at the service of the Government, without promise of fee or reward, and with no guarantee as to the length of time that he may be away. No compensation is given him for any loss that he may sustain through having to leave his farm or business, and considerable hardship is often entailed. Unfortunately, when the conventions between the British and Boer Governments were being arranged, though the matter of "commandeering" of British subjects was mentioned, the idea of expressly stipulating that British subjects should not be liable to commandeering was dismissed on an assurance from the responsible Boer official that there was no chance of such an occurrence being possible.

All this was, however, forgotten, and several Englishmen in Johannesburg were commandeered

for service against Malaboch, this meaning the loss of their situations. Instantly Johannesburg was in a ferment, and so great was the indignation that those who were debarred from holding any political rights in the country should yet be forced to do the unrecompensed work of the Boers, and so serious was the outlook that the High Commissioner, then Sir Henry Loch, journeyed to Pretoria from Cape Town to bring pressure to bear on "Oom" Paul. The success of his mission averted a very serious crisis. It was urged by some at the time that persons living in a country should *ipse facto* be subject to be called upon for its defence, and doubtless, had the danger appeared from outside, and a less aggravating course been pursued, there would not have been a tithe of the difficulty ; but in the present instance the advantage taken of the omission in the treaty to discriminate unfavourably against the "verdomder Engelschman," in making him serve in an internal native trouble, was sufficient to rouse universal indignation and condemnation.

How well named the "Blauwberg!" It rises clear, lofty and blue, with precipitous cliffs, on our left front, faced on the other hand by the grand abutments of the western extremity of the great Zoutpansberg range. Poor Malaboch now languishes in Pretoria gaol, and doubtless dreams

wearily of the days devoted to beer drinking and Kaffir pleasures in his lovely mountain home. His offence was that (Boer-like) he did not care to pay his taxes, the action of the Boers in coercing him exemplifying the difference in their eyes between the rectitude of the Boer who refuses to pay taxes and the turpitude of the other man who refuses to pay those due to *him*! And Malaboch's contention, it is to be borne in mind, was that in fact he *had* paid his taxes, but that the collector had demanded them twice over. What amount of truth there was in this it would be unfair to debate publicly without proper investigation.

One of our passengers was to have been Commandant P——, one of the Boer generals, but he had been detained through sickness. It appears that there was a rumour that certain of the officers of the Boer forces had "annexed" the loot cattle taken from Malaboch, which were really the property of the men, and P—— was on his way to make enquiries into the matter. He was laid up at a place called Warm Baths, where many Boer families repair once a year for the purpose of getting the benefit of their medicinal properties, and where, as an irreverent Johannesburg journal once reported, "Oom Paul's wife had gone to take her *annual bath*"!

This reference to the excellent partner of one of the keenest diplomatists of the day is doubtless an impertinent injustice, but it is quite credible that what exists in London among the very poor might well exist among the rank and file of a country where not only many are poor, but water is often scarce and precious. These may argue as did the Frenchman, who said: "What dirty people the English must be to need to wash every day!"

At one place a young Basuto beauty is engaged in washing clothes in a pool hard by the roadside; the traditions of Eve evidently influence her black-lead coloured descendant, whose tall, lithe form contrasts favourably with those of the lighter coloured Makatse we have been passing. The Basuto tribes to be found in the Transvaal probably migrated thither after the last war between the Free State Boers and Moshesh, Chief of Basutoland, in 1867, when a great dispersion of many of his people took place.

We do not see many men along the road, save straggling parties on their weary way to the mines at Johannesburg, and coming, probably, from far up country.

Careering down a long hill the coach rocks badly, and knocks a hole in the leather covering the "boot" in front, damaging a very suspicious-looking

box. Some nervous passenger raises the scare of "dynamite," and so everything is got out of the "boot" with as much haste as is consistent with caution. Tableau! the contents of the box prove to be bottles of Worcestershire Sauce! The anxiety is not necessarily ill-founded, for instances have been known of wagons carrying dynamite over these rough roads vanishing from the face of the earth, in company with a team of a dozen or fourteen oxen and their drivers. The disastrous explosion on the railway at Johannesburg, whereby so many lost their lives, is also an illustration of the danger which exists in the transport of explosives even by the railway.

Pietersburg, which is the northern capital of the Transvaal, boasts of a quite ambitious hotel, and might also pride itself on being the second dullest town of the Transvaal, were it not for the fact that it is sometimes enlivened by a Kaffir war in its vicinity, or by an occasional unimportant outbreak of gold fever.

Many of our passengers here branch off to the Murchison and Low Country gold fields, and we are therefore accommodated by a smaller coach, which rolls up after we have snatched a short three hours' rest.

We now leave civilisation, for there is no further

town between here and Bulawayo, and though there are a number of scattered farms here and there, after twenty miles are traversed the greater portion of the country is yet either Government property not taken up, reserves for loyal (subdued) native chiefs, or rough country practically in the hands of such chiefs as Magato was.

From the top of the coach (a position certainly preferable to the inside during the day time, notwithstanding the heat and dust), a great rounded granite excrescence is to be noted in the distance. This proves to be Witklip (white stone), at the foot of which is a solitary store, kept by one Zeeberberg, brother of the mail contractor and coach proprietor.

We are here close to the recent scene of hostilities, the Blauwberg being not more than twenty miles away, and, though the operations conducted by the Boers against Malaboch were very protracted, and considerable trouble was given, the lonely store was in no way molested, and so devoid of anxiety was its owner that he did not even remove his wife and family from the farm they occupied a few miles nearer the scene of hostilities.

At the present moment the whole family, store-keeper, wife, and children are down with fever; he apologises for the rough and ready meal he provides us with on account of this fact, and comforts us by

saying that the man who should provide us with our next meal, ten hours later, is also down with a very bad attack, and that therefore our chance of getting anything more than the breakfast we are attempting to enjoy, aided by a well-developed hunger, is very questionable.

During the day a supply of "biltong" which I had provided myself with keeps me from absolutely famishing, and I carry a lump in my coat pocket and cut a chip off it occasionally. This buck "biltong" is wonderfully nourishing and sustaining; it is simply raw antelope meat sun-dried, probably with a slight coating of salt, and it appears to retain much of the nutritive element which the raw meat is said to possess.

By this time I am on the top of the coach, and have quite an exciting time, for the thorn trees lean over the road at a height reaching to about my waist, and I have to duck every few seconds to let branches of mimosa or "wacht-eeen-beche" scrape harmlessly along my back. These thorns are most formidable weapons, those of the mimosa being stiff spears sometimes three inches long, and crowded on to a myriad of stalks; the "wacht-eeen-beche" is a small, most artfully shaped hook, from whose clutches one could well imagine it a matter of the utmost difficulty to extricate oneself should one

once become seriously entangled. Some of the boughs, which as the coach passes them are bent double by the bulky baggage, swish off when released with uncomfortable force, and I have to flatten myself on the seat, none too successfully, to avoid receiving their attentions. Seated as I am, with my back to the mules and with a view obstructed by a mountain of baggage, the suddenness with which I have to throw myself down adds an interested feeling of speculation as to the time and character of the advent of the *next* collection of vegetable needles and fish-hooks. A fellow passenger had his hand badly torn by them.

Our road lies straight through a valley which is dominated on both sides by recalcitrant savages, for on our right, in the Zoutpansberg, is the "stadt" of Magato, who has been so long a thorn in the Boer side, and against whom the Boers had intended to move the next season, when the old Kaffir warrior's death rendered such proceedings unnecessary.

The scenery, as we pass down the huge, apparently uninhabited valley between big Blauwberg and the bold cliffs constituting the extremity of the Zoutpansberg ranges, is wildly grand. There are any number of Kaffirs in the mountain strongholds, but the valley fulfilled one's idea of utter loneliness.

The vegetation is thick here, consisting mainly of thorn, mimosa, "wacht-een-bèche" (wait a bit), &c., and also of a considerable sprinkling of trees bearing quantities of queer, curling seed-pods, which have apparently been suffering from severe colic during their growth, to judge by their distortion.

At one spot I see, gathered quite close to the road with a sullenly resentful air, a mob of huge "aasvogels" (vultures); they are in some instances resting on the ground, but quite a number are perched on a tree, which seems absolutely hidden by their loathsome bodies. We approach quite close to them before they deign to fly lazily away for a few yards; too close, in fact, for we early perceive the nature of their occupation by the wafting on the breezes of an odour of a strong old kind, proceeding from a dismantled bullock lying by the side of the road. This bullock had probably died in its yoke and had been barely thrust off the road, proving a nuisance to aftercomers until the aasvogels have done their useful and necessary work. These birds are protected by law and consequently have little fear of human beings.

The rapidity with which they spot a carcase is marvellous; the sky may be apparently free of them at one moment, but on death coming to some unfortunate beast of burden a very short time may

elapse before the air is full of them. I have also heard it asserted on different occasions that the ordinary aasvogel will not touch a carcase until the king vulture has been made aware of its presence and has eaten his fill, but whether this bird is a different variety or not I am unaware. Many a time I have laid down to rest under a tree whose sparse foliage barely sheltered me from the fierce rays of noonday, and, opening my eyes, have seen the aasvogel's great expanse of wings bearing their owner tentatively high above my head! It is a strange sensation to have it thus obviously impressed upon one that one is regarded by such creatures as simply so much meat!

Arriving at Brak Rivier, famished after a day's abstinence, we are rejoiced to find the store-keeper out of bed, but looking, poor fellow, a very ghost from fever, the curse of the country. *His* wife and children are also down with it.

We this evening realise what a perfect climate generally prevails in this land; the air is balmy and marvellously clear, dry and fresh, with just a touch of the keenness which night puts into the wind which comes over the tops of the purple, looming mountains around. The sun is engaged in the somewhat tedious operation of setting, and we in the still more tedious one of digesting the abnormally tough buck

which ravenous appetites had caused us to devour uncomplainingly, when we are startled by a sudden exclamation on the part of a passenger in front, and see, keeping just ahead of the leading mules, a flock of wild guinea-fowl, probably fifty or more in number, running along the road. The grass and bushes are so thick that apparently they have no time to stop to look for an exit from the narrow track, and have recourse to futile running in front. Their running powers are great, and for fully two miles and a half these delicious game birds run before us into the increasing gloom, until finally one by one they take to their wings, which bear them over the barrier of thick bush into a secure haven beyond. These birds are excessively shy and keen-sighted, as I have reason to know later in my wanderings. The African pheasant and quail abound, slinking behind tufts of grass close to the road as we pass, and many buck are to be found in places.

One morning, shortly after sunrise, the most busy hour of the animal world, we approach very close to a "vley" (swamp), and actually come within a stone's throw of a number of Kaffir cranes, looking quaint with their topknots.

It is remarkable how close one can approach to birds or game if one be riding or driving, when any

attempt to alight or to approach them on foot would be the signal for the game to make off ; I noticed this particularly on one occasion on the Vaal river, where I have driven to within easy range of the herds of spring-bok, only to see them run like lightning on an attempt being made to alight and take aim.

At midnight we are informed that we shall stop for an hour to rest, and it will be appreciated with what feelings we hail the information when it is remembered that after some two hundred and fifty miles of coaching, with most scanty rest, we have travelled for twenty-two hours incessantly, with only two breaks for meals. Every few miles we had stopped a few minutes to change our team, and this was a welcome breathing space.

Here there is no hotel, though : no house, no barn, no pigstye even, only the rough stable full of mules ; we have simply to lie down on the dusty road, this being preferable to the tussocky veldt because softer, more even, and warmer (a fact which is appreciated by cattle, who may often be found, on a frosty night, lying on some bare patch of ground rather than on that which is grass-covered). Here my sheepskin kaross comes in useful, the sides and end of which I had placed straps on, so that I can double it over and make a sleeping-bag of it. I consider this preferable to the ordinary method of

sewing it permanently into this form, as the latter renders the kaross more difficult to dry if it gets wet.

I pick as clean a specimen of dusty road as I can find, spread my macintosh on it, then my kaross, get inside, head and all, with a bag under my head for a pillow, and sleep the sleep of the just. Before two a.m.—less than two hours since we had stopped—somebody kindly kicks me to awaken me to the fact that the mules are already inspanned and ready to start.

Previous to lying down part of our time had been devoted to consuming a hasty meal of potted meat and biscuits, and to making tea at the Kaffirs' fire in the mules' enclosure ; around this fire were half-a-dozen Kaffirs, some sitting close to it, warming their hands—weird they looked in the gloom, for the night was moonless—and some stretched recumbent on the ground, more or less near. I stumbled over one once, hardly seeing him in the darkness, and soon after came within an ace of sitting down on another, he being the victim of a trick by the firelight in making him appear like a branch or log.

We now have a span of mules quite fresh to coach work ; it is intensely dark, the track much worse than it has been before, and full of holes. Before nightfall, as it was growing dusk, I had just averted

a capsize by pointing out a sudden rut-hole fully two feet deep, which we just sheered clear of in time ; the driver laughingly said that we had escaped a tumble. Our mules, too, start unpropitiously, bolting at full speed right off the track, causing those sudden plunges and stops and uncertainties which are so distressing to those who are totally unaware of their causes and have to trust blindly to the driver and good luck. Spite of this trouble it is decided to proceed, instead of waiting for the moonrise.

We *do* proceed, with a vengeance, and it may be imagined what the feelings are of one who had not before been broken in to the experience, for the coach jumps and bounds, rolls, sways, and tumbles about, with the thorny branches suddenly and intermittently crashing against the leathern window blinds—all in deep darkness. We hold on like grim death, knowing that a driver had recently been killed in this vicinity through a capsize, and momentarily expecting to find ourselves a struggling heap of bruised humanity. We finally realise that the dawn has come, and that we have got through quite safely, but the driver says that good luck alone has done it.

In night coaching much trust is placed by the driver in his leading mules, for he simply cannot see ahead for himself, and though the mules will, as a

rule, keep in the track, they of course do not signal a mudhole.

It is quite extraordinary how one manages to sleep, penned up as one is, with no opportunity of assuming any but a very upright position in one's seat. A state of semi-conscious somnolence appears to be attained, during which one gets genuine refreshment, and to some extent avoids bruises. The body droops forward and the head down, and one swings two and fro and sideways, with the motion of the coach. I saw an illustration of the attendant danger, however, for the heads of my next door neighbour and his *vis-a-vis* clashed on one occasion.

We are now in the extreme north of the Transvaal, and are rapidly approaching the Limpopo, or Crocodile river, the boundary of the Transvaal and Mashonaland. A mile or so south of it we stop to breakfast at a miserable den kept by a storekeeper, the quality of whose food I had been warned against in good time. The store is situated on a small eminence and practically in the dry bed of the great river, therefore becoming almost an island during the worst of the summer rains. Having descended greatly from the elevation of the "high veldt," we find the heat greatly increased, and this comparatively low elevation (under 1700 feet), with the

enormous body of water in the river during the summer, causes the district to be intensely unhealthy.

Blowing our horn occasionally, as we get a glimpse of a wagon in front, that it may pull aside to admit of the unchecked passage of Her Majesty's mails, we commence our descent into the bed of the river. The track lies through very broken ground, past swamps and great granite kopjes, from the top of which many baboons watch us, standing sometimes in prominent positions in a characteristic attitude, viz., on all fours, with tails sharply arched.

The bush here is mainly "mopani" tree, though it changes considerably later on, nearer the river. The "mopani" is a straggling, short tree, which burns fiercely, and indicates by its presence, as also does the "fever-tree," a deadly neighbourhood.

As we draw nearer the river the bush becomes more luxurious and tall; it realises more nearly one's untravelled dreams of what the vegetation of tropical Africa should be. One particular species enforces our admiration; it sprouts from the ground as one huge bole, but immediately divides into several large, beautifully-spreading, branches, curving regularly upwards until at the top they burst into dark leaf, forming a wonderfully flat and bushy roof. The great full tent wagons of emigrating families look positively tiny as they lie under their shelter.

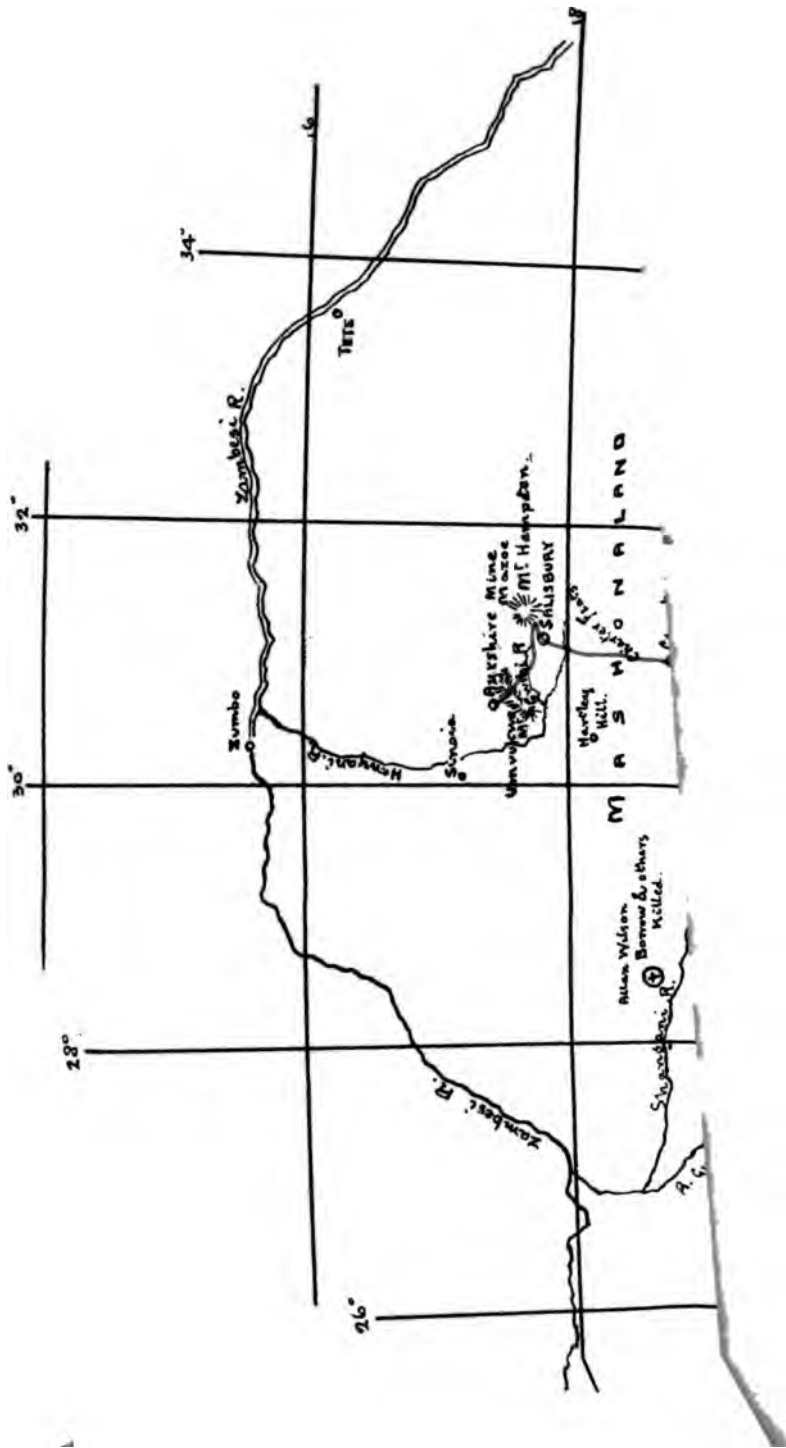
Here all kinds of life are abundant, every species of game bird, buck, jackals of many kinds, lions, leopards, snakes, and an infinite variety of birds, some beautifully coloured. Here, too, can be found the little monkey which we so often see carried captive on passing wagons.

With a whoop we drive at full speed up an eminence, and find ourselves on the top of the here lofty bank of the river Limpopo.

At one place there are a few wagons outspanned, some of the occupants of which are ill with fever, and a couple of huts indicate a dwelling. Below us rushes the great river, swirling and eddying in its muddy course. Palms are abundant, the vegetation is particularly dense, and the big pods of the "cream-of-tartar tree" (baobab), which had been gathered by a party of Englishmen *en route*, give, with the whole environment, a truly tropical character to the scene.



Sketch Map of Route





CHAPTER II.

INTO THE COUNTRY OF LOBENGULA.

WE are now at the limit of Transvaal territory, at a spot called Rhodes' Drift; the river when high, as it is to some extent now, is crossed by means of a "pont," the force of the current taking over the flat-bottomed barge, which is kept from floating down stream by an attachment to a wire rope stretched across the river.

The "pont" is guarded by a Kaffir policeman, rather a good-looking individual, and very jealous of his dignity, and by a white official, who is shaking with fever, and is the object of general commiseration.

An approach is cut in the bank to facilitate the descent to the "pont," and I confess that my first feeling is one of astonishment that the coach or a heavily laden wagon could with safety pass down its frightfully steep sides, let alone pull itself up in order to safely board the "pont."

The mules are unharnessed, save two, and are taken over to the other side, I accompanying them in order to obtain a view of the coach descending.

As we approach the Mashonaland side the banks are seen to be swarming with partridges and other game birds, which hardly trouble to move into the bush as we land.

The Limpopo rises not far from Krugersdorp, a few miles from Johannesburg, and takes a very long and semi-circular course before it develops into the fine stream which we see here. Below it passes into Portuguese territory, and becomes a characteristically tropical river, abounding in all kinds of game and reptiles. Here, even, are many crocodiles, and it is comparatively recently that the immediate vicinity was a paradise for the hunter of the biggest species of game, including elephant and giraffe. We talk with a young Dutchman who had aided in catching a young elephant but a few years ago—a baby of four feet in height, and only lately seven giraffes were caught, not a great distance away, one of which caused some excitement on its subsequent arrival at the London Zoo.

Once more on the coach we have thirty miles to travel before we reach Tuli. The patch of country we traverse, bounded by the Shashi river on the right and the Macloutsie on the left, was the bone of contention between Lobengula and Khama, and was known as the “disputed territory.” It has since been handed over to Khama.

For a long distance the scenery is lovely, granite kopjes jutting out from a mass of luxuriant foliage, large bush trees shading and separating the great boulders. The snakes here are particularly objectionable, the python and the vicious mamba abounding.

We stop at a police camp, clean and neat, and obtain a drink of water, the brown-uniformed officer being apparently glad of a crack with us.

From the top of a hill we see Tuli some four miles away, apparently down in a valley, and just beyond it the broad streak of the Shashi river, tributary of the Limpopo, winding through a vast bed of literally golden sand, for "colour"—though perhaps not much more—may be found in many a river bed.

Tuli is a fever-hole, and looks a God-forsaken place. It has lost a great part of the importance which it had at one time, when it was the first fortified camp formed in the country, and when there might have been some need of a fort within reach of the Transvaal frontier (for Dr. Jameson had, with Oom Paul's assistance, prevented a wholesale "trek" by the Boers into the country in the early days); now it does not consist of more than a somewhat important police-station, the other inhabitants of the place being a magistrate and clerk, six police, a hotel-keeper, and a few odds and ends in the way of storekeepers, blacksmiths, etc.

We find to our disgust that instead of having a few hours to sleep we shall for some reason have to travel right on, so we leave the collection of mud and reed huts, fort and "hotel," and bowl on our way across the river, this being the second day of travelling without any stop whatever for sleep. Every traveller must be prepared to meet and pass through such trying ordeals.

The river bed appears to be three parts of a mile across or more, but of this the river at present occupies but a comparatively small portion. In wet seasons it becomes as much as three miles broad, and on the banks, far above the level of the bed, we see the great palm trees with flood-débris twenty feet up their stems.

The water is deep, entering the body of the coach, so that we draw our legs up to avoid getting wet, and the river bed being very soft causes us to very nearly stick in the middle. The gallant mules strain and pull, swerving from side to side, and, with the aid of frightful thrashings, drag us heroically through; but during some stops in mid-stream our wheels sink so deep into the sand that it almost appears that we shall stick there for good.

In the neighbourhood the mahogany tree with its pretty seeds grows, and a day's march behind is "Cream-of-Tartar-Fontein," which we had passed at

night. This is a small oasis in the desert of bush country where a number of scattered baobab trees rear their great bulk above the pigmies. The fruit of this contains lumps of cream of tartar surrounding the seeds, and this is drunk with water as a refreshing beverage and preventive of fever.

The road now becomes very bad, it being a new road made by the coach proprietor, which shortens the journey to Bulawayo by many miles, and for passing over which he charges a toll on all teams using it. The section is about eighty miles long. We rattle on, nevertheless, though it is certain that the driver cannot see where he is going, and sometimes we sustain some painful bumps. The rains have played havoc with the roads, and especially of the new-made drifts across the spruits; it is no exaggeration to say that the road at many of the spruits passes down banks, almost, if not quite as steep as the average railway embankment. Usually there are nearly vertical jumps some two or three feet in depth to be negotiated, which the coach "takes" in most sportsmanlike style, its body leaping forward and downward; then at the bottom there will be a mudhole, very deep and narrow, into which the front wheels fit with a bump and sudden stop. The harness is then slack on account of the coach overtaking the mules, the latter will pull up

the slack with a sudden jerk, and only the main force of their ascent of the opposite bank enables them to extricate the coach, the effect being to lift the front part almost bodily as they pull.

The rate at which we go down the bank is simply prodigious, and the shock as we stop in the mudhole is often so great that we can hardly prevent ourselves being thrown off our seats into the fore end of the coach. One hill in particular we rush down, which would cause care to be taken if one were on foot, full of loose stones, hummocks, and ruts, and like the side of a house in its steepness. This is done safely, though at night and in complete darkness. Occasionally the mules are overtaken on descending into a spruit, and jumbled into a crowd by the coach behind, on one occasion a poor brute falling with its head helplessly under water.

In this darkness, travelling along the banks of the Shashi for some distance, we cross one of its tributaries no fewer than fifteen times, and for the first time I smell the odour of malaria wafted from the low-lying country by the river, and vile it is.

As we pass a clump of thick and high bush, fringing the road, full of undergrowth and on the banks of a stream, I say to my neighbour: "Is not that just the place where one might expect a lion to lie?" I have reason to remember this

observation later on, for on my return journey I learn that a lion had taken an ox out of a travelling team during my absence, and had been killed by a gun trap at this very spot.

The sun having risen, I can see that we have been passing through a beautiful country, and for some distance this continues; I can only liken it to a part of Devonshire, though, of course, without the damp freshness of the green county.

Then we begin to come across huts of the poor, degraded Mashonas, beehive-like, and perched on rocks high up the steep kopjes that the blackguardly Matabele might catch and murder them less easily. The newer huts, it is worthy of notice, are apparent at a much less altitude; indeed, there are many at a level with the growing crops of corn, speaking volumes on the subject of the justice of the Matabele war.

We cross the Umzingwane River, on the course of which the trading company of a friend of mine has a huge property, and where game of every kind is said to abound, including giraffe and hippopotamus, etc.; later we thread our way through a big network of granite kopjes of a most picturesque character. The country is excessively rough and broken at this point.

As it grows dark, we stop for a few minutes at a

store kept by a little Jew, who is exceedingly attentive, but whose meal is unattractive to us, hungry as we are.

A few police are resting here, having in charge a cattle stealer of some notoriety, and we are interested to hear that it was at this place that a well-known cattle-lifter escaped some time previously, with, it was believed, the connivance of one of the officers. The Transvaal is the goal of such criminals, and the importance of Tuli as a police station is therefore manifest. It is to be feared that, at any rate in the early days of the occupation, many cases of theft or forcible abduction of cattle belonging to the natives occurred, unauthorised individuals demanding them in the name of the government under the pretence that they were police. To check this class of robbery, it was enacted that the purchase of cattle from natives should be illegal, particularly as large numbers of Lobengula's herds had in one way or another disappeared, and the country, which owes much of its healthiness to the systematic eating down of the grass, was beginning to suffer. Another regulation is that travelling herds must be accompanied by a permit, stating number and destination, and a driver is liable to imprisonment if he fail to account for any cattle in excess of the number therein mentioned.

Night has once more fallen, the third without any proper rest, and we begin to be weary, although it is remarkable how entirely the fatigue seems to disappear when the sun gets up once more. We are told that the road ahead is far worse than any we have so far encountered, which is speaking strongly, yet the driver determines to waste no time waiting for the moon, although we have plenty of time in hand.

It is certainly the worst experience of the whole journey; we have to cling to the coach the whole time, and at places it leans over so tremendously that, with the great weight of baggage on the top, it is incomprehensible how it fails to completely overturn.

It gets darker still, and at one place we stop, the driver going forward to reconnoitre; a consultation between him and the black helper follows, and we start again. Before we know what is happening, we find the coach jumping down the bank into fairly deep water and the mules plunging and splashing. The road here passes right through a morass, the passage through which in the absolute darkness is a matter of some difficulty.

One side or other of the coach suddenly drops into a hole, causing a dangerous angle to be assumed, and we are devoutly hoping that we shall attain the

opposite side safely, when we stop suddenly with a great crash, the body of the coach rears backwards, its front high in the air, and we are thrown violently one on to the other. We realise at once that *our* accident has happened.

The cry arises "Get out sharp, she is sinking deeper!" and with the greatest difficulty we by degrees disentangle ourselves and find that we are able, with the exercise of some agility, to jump on to dry land.

It appears that the driver had got off the track through the morass in the darkness, and, though by good luck he had avoided accident through getting into deep water or mud, he had gone crash into a bank four feet high, the front wheels mounting lopsidedly, but the back ones remaining deeply imbedded in the mud and bank. We are conscious of considerable self-congratulation that the coach has not been thrown over into the water, for it would have been a matter of no small difficulty to have extricated ourselves from the entanglement we had been thrown into, had we been plunged under water and had to find our way one at a time through door or windows which might have been partially blocked !

The body of the coach is almost standing on end, and we have grave fears that we shall have to do the rest of the journey on foot. The mails are in an

awkward situation, for, being placed at the back of the coach, about breast-high from the ground, the lower portion of them is immersed in the water.

We pity the unfortunate Kaffir whose business it is to plunge waist-deep into the cold water, bitter as the wind is, for he remains there a good quarter-of-an-hour while off-loading and carrying the heavy sacks ashore.

Inspection shows no very serious damage, though the "disselboom" (pole) is badly cracked, the "lynch-pin" (swivel of the forecarriage) bent, and the brake much damaged.

We all help to dig the coach out, but it is a matter of some time, and every moment we fear that on the wheels being released it may capsize. I lazily but effectively help the operations by shedding light on the scene by means of a candle-end which I had in my bag—the only light available! The slant is so great that the various articles of baggage on the roof are in a state of wonderful disarray, some hanging precariously over the sides by the retaining cords. On the whole it is a sorry spectacle.

The next stable, towards which we make our way, stumbling over the rough ground in our attempts to keep to the track, is some miles away, and we come to the conclusion that it will be the best course to repair thither and utilise the period taken in patching

up the coach in sleeping. I feel but little sorry for the delay.

We walk onward, and our little band tails out until I find I am quite alone. The wind has sunk to nothing, the voices at the coach die away in the distance behind me, and I realise fully the awful loneliness of the vast African veldt at night. How intensely silent it is! Stopping to look unavailingly around (for the clouded sky is scarcely distinguishable from the blackness of the earth), one feels that one has never known silence or solitude before, since this is it. What an atom is man in this mysterious immensity!

I settle down by a fire, once more to sleep in the open, having drawn off my boots, for the spruits had been a source of trouble in the darkness, and it is not until an hour before sunrise that the coach overtakes us, patched up as well as possible under the circumstances.

On entering a little store here, we find it tenanted by its owner and by two persons, a man and a woman, engaged in *tramping* up to Bulawayo. We do not disturb them.

Only a few months later the revolt of the Matabele caused these outlying posts to be deserted.

Fortunately we are not much more than thirty miles away from Bulawayo, for there are very grave

doubts as to the ability of the coach to take us on without accident in its crippled condition, especially as once again the worst part of the road has yet to come. At one spot so bad is it, so steep, and so slanting from side to side, that we have to get out, fasten a rope to the top rail, and literally hold the coach on to its upper wheels as it passes down. At another place still the situation is worse, for the same thing happens, only with a thirty foot precipice to fall over, into the bargain.

The Matoppo Hills are well known to us, for they formed an invaluable defence to Lobengula on the direct south during the war which so lately transformed the country from the exclusive abode of a powerful savage race into a civilised land, where there is room and indeed necessity for black as well as white inhabitants.

The range is approached through a series of extraordinary boulder kopjes, of the type of which we have seen so many since our entrance into Matabeleland, and the road is so furrowed and rutted by spruits that even with the South African coach we have often to alight and walk.

Here and there we see evidences of what had once been Matabele outpost camps or the houses of the Mashona whom they had dispossessed and destroyed—old “gardens,” marked by the original

bush trees, killed by the process known in Australia as "ring-barking," which name sufficiently explains its meaning.

We do not see Bulawayo until we are within a mile or so of it, and then we are fairly struck with astonishment.

On the road we meet parties of almost naked Maholis, probably on their way to work in repairing the roads; these are members of a tribe once dependent on the Matabele and subservient to them. Here and there, too, we see the ruins of Matabele kraals, the circular mud foundation walls alone remaining. No kraals are now allowed within a certain radius of the town, and in compliance with this regulation those before our eyes had been burnt in the early days of the occupation.

One exception is evident, though, and this is a collection of a few huts surrounded by a hedge of mimosa thorn, certainly offensive to the naked Kaffir intruder.

All at once the town appears before us; on every hand are claims pegged off—prospectors' tents are dotted over the landscape, and we rattle past wagon after wagon with cargoes of goods come from Johannesburg or Mafeking, and many owned by Bamangwato Kaffirs from Palapye.

We cross the river, which at the moment is but a

trickling stream, and, tootling our horn bravely, bowl thankfully into the city of Bulawayo, which, at twelve months old only, counted about seventeen hundred souls. With a general impression of a town containing a large number of brick buildings and extending over a considerable area, we find it an extraordinary evidence of what the search for gold will cause British pluck and enterprise to accomplish.

My journey has been undertaken without companions, and, though this has the advantage that no one else has to be conferred with respecting plans and intentions, it has the corresponding disadvantage that one is too often thrown entirely into one's own company at times when the eyes and opinions of a second person would be most helpful and interesting. Still, this feeling decreases strangely as custom habituates one to solitude, and is most strongly exemplified in the cases of old hunters whom I have met who are never happy when hunting in the company of others, and only seem in their element when trekking far away from their white brethren with but a small retinue of Kaffir attendants.

Our coach-load of passengers was a motley assembly. One was a Californian miner (whom another man accused most wrongfully of stealing his whisky), another an old Mashonalander, as hard

as nails in every way, another claimed the prefix of "Honourable," and yet one more was a steady, self-reliant Bulawayo merchant. Amongst the rest was a miserable specimen of a Colonial "waster," who interlarded every other word with the vilest oaths, and was promptly sat on by the remaining passenger, who was probably twenty-two stone in weight, and while expressing his sympathy with the poor mules, was the only one who invariably refused to alight on coming to a stiff bit of road.

The feature of their conversation was the intense belief expressed in the brightness of the future of their adopted country—a conviction on the part of its pioneers essential to the country's development.

Strangely enough, on alighting from the coach I do not feel in the least fatigued, though the journey has been so rough, and for six nights my rest has not averaged more than, say, two-and-three-quarter hours.

Bulawayo modern is situated about three miles from the site of Bulawayo ancient, and is truly a marvellous place.

It is a fair-sized town, with broad, regular streets, and many excellent brick or iron buildings. In the five months from March to August, 1894, these increased in number from three hundred and six to four hundred and fifty, more than two-thirds being

of brick. Much development has since taken place. A convenient club-house is a favourite *rendezvous* and there are several hotels. The Charter hotel is preferred by many, being in the main street, and is very extensively patronised. The Maxim—the name of which is a reminiscence of the war—is its most important rival, being the first built in the town, at a cost of about five thousand pounds, and only six months after the entrance of the troops into Bulawayo.

The rooms generally open on to the street, or on to a square accessible from the street, and are comfortably though plainly appointed. The catering in the better hotels is very creditable, and the charges, considering the great cost of supplies, are most moderate. Beds are charged a guinea a week, and board ranges from ten to twelve pounds a month, notwithstanding the fact that, as an example, eggs vary in price on the market from 13s. 6d. to 19s. 6d. per dozen; potatoes at times will sell at £5 a sack, and it is not so long ago that in Mashonaland a bottle of brandy was deemed worth the same amount.

Bulawayo is laid out in the modern fashion of square blocks, with broad and roomy streets. It lies on the northern slope of the river, and at its highest point are the fort, the police camp, and the new

hospital built in memory of those true Britons who fell on the Shangani river. Below comes the first main street, with blocks of brick buildings, generally one-storied, consisting mainly of offices of various companies, often with living rooms attached, and also of the public offices, such as Court-house, Mines Office, &c.

Below, again, are two or three other streets, all of considerable length, with numbers of brick or iron houses already erected, and many others in progress. Land has acquired a considerable value, and large sums have been realised by the Company at various times by its sale. But re-sale has been the test, and stands which were bought for small sums from the Company have since been declined sale at even £1500 to £2000.

Below the Maxim hotel is the great market-square, which is a feature in every South African town. In this square are held daily sales by auction, at which market produce, job lots of goods, and only too often dead mens' outfits, are disposed of. It is a motley assemblage, consisting of a selection of every class of resident, from the financial man, storekeeper, and prospector down to "Cape boys" and Kaffirs. The market buildings are in the centre, but they fulfil other purposes as well, as one wing is occupied by that



lucrative piece of property—in Rhodesia—a billiard table.

The square is extremely large, and has a considerable disadvantage in being so, inasmuch as it forms a starting point for many of the dust storms which afflict Bulawayo in a far worse degree than even Johannesburg. The prevailing winds sweep across the square, and have room to attain full swing in it, raising vast clouds of dust which later envelop the town. I have watched a whirlwind travel slowly along in this way, carrying a huge gyrating column of dust with it, and should the door of any unfortunate person be open in its track, it will, without warning, scatter his papers and fill the atmosphere with a stifling and hot dust, scraps of paper, and all the abominations of an ox-trodden thoroughfare.

The opposite side of the river is ordinarily on the weather side of the square, and it is here that residential sites are in demand, for this locality is as pleasantly situated as any in the neighbourhood. Not only this, but the brewery is handy!

Who could doubt that this is a mining camp? Men promenade, lunch and dine in flannel shirts, breeches, and jack boots; belts round their waists carry jack knives and leathern pouches. Slouch hats, too, are the order of the day. Revolvers are rarely seen, as

one may see them in many a budding camp in Western America, and a large proportion of the men consists of as good specimens of English gentlemen as may be met with anywhere. Manners are naturally free and easy, and among the more "mixed" portion of the community there is just the same rowdiness that every new camp is blessed with—only without the use of the six-shooter.

Several days pass in forming acquaintances, the names of many of whom were prominent during the war, and a few of whom knew Bulawayo while Lobengula yet sat under the great "indaba-tree," and his insolent young men could with impunity insult the white man. What a change from the most cruel and ignorant of savage rule to a just and civilising government!

The longer I remain here the more I am astonished at what has been accomplished in the short time which has elapsed since the occupation of the country. The whole land is over-run with prospectors, who in the course of their wanderings are greatly exposed to danger in case of a rising by the Matabele.

I make particular inquiries as to the possibility of such an event occurring, and in the light of subsequent events the general feeling of the community is interesting. There appears to be little fear

expressed that such a thing will happen, though on inquiry I find that only one-third of the Matabele that remained after the war were disarmed entirely, and that therefore in the more remote districts the native element must yet be considered as a force. Even at the moment discussion is renewed as to the fact of the death of Lobengula from fever and fatigue, far north, and a report is current that he still lives, but is "lying low." This is generally discredited by those who have had experience of the Matabele and their methods, particularly as Lobengula's wives have dispersed and the whereabouts of his more important indunas are known.

This feeling of security is doomed to have a rude awakening, for on the 26th of March, 1896, came the news of a rising in the Inseza and Filabusi districts, adjoining the Gwanda on the north-east, and of the murder and mutilation of a number of settlers. Expeditions made under Captains Spreckley, Selous, Gifford, and Napier confirmed the sad news, and, while relieving many white people, only made it the more clear that the rebellion was a serious one, and that the reports which had been flying about for some time previously possessed a better foundation than they had had credit for.

The whole country, with the exception of a few loyal Indunas, followed this example, and the wave of rebellion, with its cruel murders and outrages, spread even to the northern and eastern districts of Mashonaland; in a few days many more lives had been sacrificed than were lost during the entire war of occupation.

There appear to be several facts which might be cited as supplying a reason for the revolt; the news of Dr. Jameson's defeat coupled with the discontent engendered by the confiscation of the cattle, which, as the property of the king, had been confiscated after the war, and, again, the destruction of those afflicted with the rinderpest, or cattle plague, which was a well-meant effort to deal practically with the disease which was decimating the cattle of Bechuanaland and Matabeleland. Certain it is that the Matabele chose a time of year to revolt which was the very worst for their purposes, for the winter, or dry season, had well commenced, enabling white forces to operate without the difficulty, danger, and privation which summer warfare involves. Again, the stores of grain were by that time getting low and field work would be interrupted, involving great scarcity of grain for the next year, and much consequent distress.

As might be expected, the situation was very

firmly grappled with by the inhabitants, and many a gallant engagement was fought with, fortunately, the invariable result that victory attended them, though valuable lives were in some cases lost, sometimes in heroic self-sacrifice.

Imperial assistance was necessarily given, though it was long before it could come to hand, but the presence of Sir Frederick Carrington, who took over the conduct of the military operations on behalf of the Imperial government, and that of the founder of the colony, Mr. Rhodes, gave renewed encouragement to the pioneers, the latter being an earnest of the intention of the Chartered Company to face its difficulties and to show that whatever straits its sons may be put to, Rhodesia can hold its own, this being the first essential for a self-governing colony.

The population of Bulawayo during this outbreak consisted of 1466 men, 328 women, and 460 children (2254 in all), with about 1800 natives, the remarkable feature of these figures being the unusually large proportion of women and children in so young a mining camp. The population of the outlying districts it would be difficult to arrive at with exactitude, but including the districts of Gwanda, Gwelo, Belingwe, and others, though at the time many persons would have fled to Bulawayo for

safety, it would probably not be far off the mark to estimate it at about a thousand more.

Everywhere are seen prospectors' camps, and miles of country are pegged out, the pegs usually being sticks set up on a heap of stones, with a piece of a whisky case (say) nailed on the top, indicating the corner of each block of ten claims, a right angle trench also being cut in the ground.

Neglect to keep these landmarks in proper condition is punishable by fine.

When it is realised that many of the big syndicates hold as many as seven to eight hundred claims, that many have done a considerable amount of development work in the few months that have been available, that in many places a hundred and fifty to two hundred boys or more are engaged, and that labour in many places is at a premium, one begins to become alive to what this place may ultimately develop into.

I have naturally been very anxious to visit the site of the old Bulawayo, and I therefore embrace an opportunity given me to ride out to the King's Kraal, some three miles distant from the new Bulawayo, which is situated on the bank of a small river.

With a rare instinct the conqueror has built himself a house where the King's own hut stood,

so that all recalcitrant or unbelieving Matabele may know it as a sign that Lobengula is swept away by the new power, and that where the old king reigned now rules the great white chief.

The situation commands a grand view of all the



"The King is dead; long live the King."

GOVERNMENT HOUSE AND LOBENGULA'S INDABA TREE.

surrounding country. The great flat hill in the eastern distance is Thabes Induna; close to it is a conical kopje, not many miles from which the decisive battle of Bembisi was fought, and whence, after the fight, the advancing troops witnessed the explosion of the magazine where Lobengula

had stored his ammunition, on the spot where I stand.

There is the big "Indaba-tree" under which Lobengula would sit on ceremonial occasions; there are the brick remains of the magazine; there again is the great heap of charred bones, remains of many a feast on ox or antelope flesh. Nor are the bones confined to this, for a portion of an elephant's bone is discovered among the *débris*.

Further is to be seen the grass-overgrown site of the great dances, now forsaken and only distinguished by the evenness and smoothness of the long grass tops; then a hundred yards away is a clump of the few remaining huts which sheltered the flower of the late king's bodyguard, and of these, only the circular mud foundation walls, some three or four feet in height, still stand. The plan of the kraal was that usual among the Zulu races, the King's house, said to have been built by an English sailor, being surrounded by a huge circle of his warriors' homes, four or five hundred yards in diameter, those of his wives lying close behind his own. The little dwelling places are usually but seven to eight feet in diameter, and the means of entrance is by a hole in the wall just large enough for a stout person to squeeze through with some difficulty. A story was told me of the fear excited

in the early days of Mashonaland on the part of the women by the entrance of a white man into a kraal, causing the swarthy bipeds to run shrieking and scrambling to their nearest available huts; unfortunately for some, a very stout dowager stuck fast in the doorway, effectually blocking the passage of her shrieking sisters behind her. She was eventually hauled out of her uncomfortable position, and would doubtless personally supervise or carry out the building of her front door in the future.

The roofs are thatched with long grass which grows in the "vleys," and the floor is of mud, cowdung, and bullocks' blood.

I crawl into one or two of the burnt-out huts of Lobengula's queens, and here and there find a relic of the late occupants. In one hut I find a mass of melted beads, in another a carved wooden spoon; in several places even the ashes of the porridge which was being cooked at the time Lobengula gave the order to fly, meet my eye. Clearly the evacuation must have been a very sudden and unexpected event, the prestige of the fierce Imbezu regiment being sufficient to prevent any serious fears being entertained as to their success at Bembisi, until, like a thunderbolt the news came that these unconquered braves had been utterly routed and that the "mulungu" (white man) was advancing on them.

So the mealie meal was left to burn in the clay or wooden pots, the wealth of beads was abandoned, the grindstone (formed of a large stone with a hollow in it, in which a round stone crushed the corn) was deserted, and, lastly, the magazine, with its thousands of cartridges, was fired, scattering its contents far around, and giving to the invader the signal that the Matabele power was at length crushed.

Only a few hundred yards away is the house where the traders Fairbairn and Usher were, with rare generosity and with great difficulty, guarded by Lobengula throughout the hostilities. Here they were found in perfect safety by the incoming troops.

The Kaffir spoons are sometimes odd in their shapes ; many certainly do not fulfil European ideas as to handiness, having handles cut in a considerable number of zigzags ! The bowls are laboriously carved out of a single block of hard wood.

As will have been gathered, the situation, commanding as it does such an extensive view, is very exposed, and it receives the full heat of the scorching sun, so that I feel grateful for the liberty which Bulawayo custom permits in the matter of dress, and the comparative coolness of a shirt and riding breeches only.

About fifteen miles north of Bulawayo, on the

Khami river, are some remains of ancient buildings similar to those so frequently found scattered over the whole of Mashonaland. I much desire to visit these, but it would be difficult for me to find the way to them alone, there being only a track, and it is only on occasion that others, who know the situation, can find the leisure to devote the time to such an excursion.

My slumbers at night are often disturbed by the scampering of rats over the coarse cotton sheeting which forms the ceiling of my room, but I am even with them for the moment, for, by the impression their weight makes on the sheeting as they cross, I am able to trace their movements and use an assegai I have picked up with deadly effect.

One day I take a ride round to the racecourse, which should in time, with the expenditure of some money, become a very fair one. To me it appears that its main disadvantage is that its sides are in places lined with large boulders, which might make a fall in their vicinity serious.

I find my horse very fresh, and as it had recently been raced against my companion's steed on the same ground, it considers that the present is a good opportunity for testing its powers once more, and I consequently get a good gallop along the course.

Thence we proceed to the site of the Queen's

kraal, on which the hand of the utilitarian has been placed, for the huts have been levelled to the earth, and the site is used as a football ground. The place is admirably adapted for its present use, being a great flat circular stretch of grass-covered ground, until lately encircled by huts, as is yet plainly visible; it also has the characteristic appearance of ground which has been habitually trampled on by many feet. What a change and contrast; but a few months ago Lobengula's warriors were dancing there, now the ground is the scene of contest between eager football teams.

Here, again, the position is a commanding one; there is the ever visible Thabes Induna, where Lobengula once indulged in a great massacre, while Bulawayo lies beneath us about three miles away; gleaming white in the brilliant sunshine stands the house of the new king, accentuating the fact that barbarism has given way to civilisation, and that Lobengula's "mana," as the Maoris would say, has descended on Cecil Rhodes.

The great excitement at the period we were in Bulawayo, was the enrolment of a volunteer, or more properly speaking, a militia force. It was expected that a large body would be raised in Bulawayo itself, and that substantial supplementary ones would be formed in Salisbury and Gwelo. There had been

a great deal of speculation as to the reason for the raising of such a force, and the explanation given was that it was simply in accordance with the undertaking given to the Government by the Company to maintain a force equal to dealing with any native disturbances.

The Company made up its mind to equip the "Rhodesia Horse" in no niggard spirit, for the outfit of each man consists of uniform and arms (Lee-Metford rifle), and a "salted" horse (that is a horse which has suffered and recovered from the sickness which is such a scourge in this country, and is, therefore, unlikely to have a recurrence of it). The estimated cost is over fifty thousand pounds.

Certainly the step should have a good effect on the Matabele mind, and in this connection it should be remembered that probably only one-third of the conquered race was disarmed after the war, and it is remotely possible that their services may be actively required on account of a rising.*

But few true Matabele are to be seen in the town,

* These lines were written months before the need of this was actually demonstrated, though, unfortunately, at the time when the possible rising became a fact, a large portion of the members of the force were in England, whither they had been deported after taking part in the forcible entry into the Transvaal, which caused such complications both in Africa and in Europe.

and this is perhaps a sign that they have not yet realised that the white incomers are a force which they will always have to reckon and deal with. The sable ladies and gentlemen who unconcernedly stroll about the town, particularly affecting the slaughter-houses, are mainly Maholi (half-bred Matabele), and of a very inferior class. The pure blooded Matabele has not yet lost all his swagger and self-importance.

It strikes one as unconventional to pass a black lady, with only a leathern apron round her loins, striding past one in the middle of the town, a huge load on her head, and a piccanin sitting astride the small of her back, then to hear, perhaps, her grave and respectful salutation, "Sakabona, Ankosi" (good day, chief). Occasionally one is to be seen with a trace of European clothing—and, indeed, I once noted a young girl who had picked up an old glove and had tied it round her neck. She was hardly so far advanced as the tinted belle who asked a storekeeper in Natal for a pair of flesh coloured gloves and went off in a huff because she was offered *black* ones!

The newspapers here are a credit to the town, and are good samples of what enterprise in journalism can effect. In the early days of their existence such a paper as the *Bulawayo Chronicle* appeared in "cyclostyle," but it long ago (in the history of

modern Bulawayo this term is comparative) blossomed out into a broad and neatly-printed sheet.

Bulawayo is reached from Mafeking (the temporary terminus at this time of the Cape Government railway), after about four hundred and fifty miles coach journey over country which cannot compare for scenery and interest with the route from the Transvaal. The road passes through Khama's country, and his capital, Palapwe (or Palatswe), forms one of the resting-places *en route*. The Mangwato tribe, over which he rules, is prosperous under his government, but those individuals who have come under my notice appear to me to be poor specimens of the South African native. Many attain considerable (for a native) wealth, and a large proportion of the transport riders who are passed on the way to Bulawayo, taking up wagon-loads of supplies, are the actual owners of the wagons and teams. They are also most expert in the art of preparing "karosses," or rugs made of the skins of animals, well "braided," or cured, by treating with wood ash and rubbing; the sewing of these karosses is a marvel of neatness and strength, and the variety is wonderful.

The Tuli road skirts a district called the Gwanda, which has been the scene of a large amount of prospecting and about which report speaks well. It

is reached from a stage called Manzi-nyama, about eighty miles from camp, where we had picked up some Bulawayo residents who had been inspecting some property and who, when we first saw them, were engaged in an absorbing discussion, suddenly interrupted by a series of scratches being made in the thick dust of the road; this is the universal method of illustrating such mysterious matters as the lie of a reef, its dip and situation.

Further there is the Belingwe district, which has also been the object of much attention on the part of prospectors and others, and twenty miles or so to the north-east the Bembisi country gives a rich promise. A hundred and twenty miles or so north of Bulawayo bends the Shangani river, where Wilson, Borrow, and their companions met with their fate; this river, as do the companions of its system, rises to the east of Bulawayo, and, flowing in a north-westerly direction, finally falls into the Zambesi. The road north-east to Gwelo and Salisbury proceeds along the head-waters of the rivers, those to the left hand flowing as described, and those to the right finding their way into the branches of the Limpopo. No one can regard the map of Rhodesia, or travel through the country, without being impressed by the abundance of rivers, which during a great portion of the year render it a splendidly watered country.

Just before my departure from Bulawayo I hear a strange noise and excitement a hundred yards away, round the corner of a store belonging to an old Matabeleland trader, greatly respected by the natives. Running round with my camera, I find a small regiment of Kaffir girls, probably fifty in number, marching through the town to the store four or five abreast, carrying on their heads loads of a long grass used for thatching huts. In unison with their pace, and sounding sweet in the distance, they chant a monotonous song, the phrases of which are oft repeated, though my ignorance of the language prevents me from recognising whether there is any variation in the words. The girls appear to be of various stages of youth, from the half-developed maiden to the fully fledged "umfaas," and, as they drop their bundles, they stand, looking curiously expectant, as the camera immortalises the scene.

CHAPTER III.

THE TRAIL OF WAR.

A CART and horses takes me forward on my journey to the Bembisi battle field, but it appears, on the face of it, most improbable that the horses can possibly drag themselves over the twenty-five miles of veldt before them; speaking roughly, and judging from these specimens, it might be hazarded that the way to produce a "salted" horse might be to take as a basis a broken-down cab horse, starve him for a week, and then drive him, say, from London to Dover. If he were so unfortunate as to survive, he would approximate in appearance and vigour the poor creatures that are to take me forward. At a slow and feeble amble we start through the town in a reluctant, hesitating fashion, and I inspect the black "boy" from the Colony, whose "baas" had earnestly begged me to "take care of." This meant, presumably, that it was incumbent upon me to prevent other people from kicking him.

The road lies through the low bush of the country, and about two miles out is seen that most pretty

and characteristic sight, a couple of long tented wagons, outspanned. The "bucksails" spread over the tops of the wagons form an enclosure between, under which are three or four brawny white men lying or sitting in abandoned ease as they take their noonday rest. In front is their fire of inflammable and long-smouldering bush wood, which burns to a pure white ash, and round it and on it are a variety of cooking utensils, which a Kaffir is tending. Rugs and blankets spread out to air in the glorious sunshine, a sporting gun leant against the wheel, and a fiddle lying on the wagon mattress, give an idea of peripatetic domesticity altogether attractive to a person who has not had too much of it. Hard by the Kaffir servants squat round another fire, scooping their mess of meal out of the three-legged iron pot, and the oxen graze lazily among the bushes.

Armstrong's store passed, and the Umguza river (crocodile haunted) forded, Thabes Induna grows large on the left, and the conical kopje is seen to be surmounted by a flag, which has probably been placed there by a surveyor. Here and there we pass through some thick bush, and far ahead a long line of it stretches, thin and dark. The country to the right is low, and an extensive view of the undulating country far away is obtainable, studded with fantastic kopjes. In one place they become

indistinct on account of a cloud of smoke, which grows larger and nearer as we proceed. It doubtless is the result of an extensive veldt fire, but its rate of travel is puzzling. Soon a considerable portion of the horizon is obscured, and winged objects fly past us. The air becomes full of myriads of flying particles, and it is evident that the cloud of smoke is nothing but a vast flight of locusts—one of the most extensive that has been seen in these parts. The effect is peculiarly dazzling, for one becomes aware of three distinct classes of motion in a million different spots. There is the motion of the flapping wings, the forward, drifting flight, and the apparent difference in speed, caused by the varying distance of the particles from the observer. Then, varying with the eddies of the breeze, some portions will surge forward or sideways, causing a thickening of the mass in spots and consequent rarefaction in others. Many fall to the ground, but in this case the flight appears to be high in the air, and will travel far over the Thabes Induna, which is absolutely blocked from view by the dense mass of the flying grasshoppers, for such they resemble. It is said that they are eatable if roasted and pounded up, but it would take a large proportion of wild honey to make the preparation palatable to the majority of persons.

The resting-place for the night is indicated by a clump of huts on rising ground ahead, which illustrates how wonderfully far away an object in this atmosphere may be when it is apparently within hailing distance. The same illusion obtains again when two small trees are pointed out as the site of the Chartered Company's laager at the battle of Bembisi, only three undulations of the veldt from the store. But those undulations seem never ending, and the walk proves to be fully twenty minutes in duration. On arrival at the scene it is obvious that no better position could have been chosen for defensive purposes, as it commands the country in every direction, the weakest side being that facing the long line of bush which skirts the position, a couple of hundred yards to the north. It was hence that the first attack was made by the flower of Lobengula's army, the young men of the unconquered Imbezu Regiment. It is said that despite the reverse at Shangani, and a probable disinclination to fight further on the part of Lobengula, the young bloods clamoured that they should be allowed *their* fling at the despised "mulungu," and that they, the unconquered and full blood Matabele Regiment, might annihilate the intruders, whose solitary representatives in earlier days they had been accustomed to treat

with insolence and contumely when trading at Bulawayo.

A relic of the fray in the shape of a Maxim cartridge case is picked up, and the bush approached. Not far had to be traversed before, lying in the grass behind some clumpy bushes, certainly not sixty yards from the position of the laager, a skeleton is visible, lying huddled up just as its late owner had fallen. On proceeding through the bush, the remains of many more are found of the misguided youths who had been so foolish as to boast that they would wipe out the white man. Some are extended at full length, while others are tumbled together as though they had died in a crouching attitude. It is wonderful how close some had managed to approach the laager, considering the withering hail of bullets that the tattered condition of the trees and shrubs yet bears evidence of. The Matabele simply swarmed out of this bush in thousands; the more formidable, too, that they were strong in the conviction that victory could not fail to be theirs. Though the attack was strongest at this side, others were severely engaged. Down in a clump of bush to the north the picket Thompson was surprised and killed before he had time to mount his horse and escape, while his companion only escaped by the skin of his teeth by running parallel to the laager rather than

straight towards it, thus enabling the Maxim to play on his pursuers, who were just at his heels.

On the opposite side of the bush the hill descends rather sharply, and it was here that a calamity was almost caused by the horses stampeding. The enemy, noticing this, endeavoured to cut them off, and nearly succeeded in doing so, with the small party headed by poor Borrow and Sir John Willoughby, who had galloped out to recover them. The Kaffirs aided the rescuers unintentionally, and defeated their own purpose by firing on the horses, wounding one or two, which had the effect of turning them all.

Filled with martial spirit, I descend the slope, and am startled by a Matabele rising suddenly out of the ground before me. Possibly with recollections of the Maxim, he flees before my gun; but unavailingly, for at eighty yards he tumbles head over heels at a shot from my twenty-bore shot gun—an event which raises me many pegs higher in the estimation of the young Africander who witnesses the fall of the Matabele—hare.

Up long before daybreak, rest having been taken in the usual round mud hut, I am in the thick bush four miles away before sunrise, searching for duiker buck, which are plentiful here. Arrived on the fringe of a large space clear of bush, much of

which has been used by the Kaffirs in the kraal hard by for growing corn on, and is traversed by a deep winding donga, we see a tiny fawn-coloured spot five hundred yards away. Recognition must have been mutual, for the buck gently canters into the nearest bush, and subsequent search for him proves unavailing. A snap shot in the bush later on proves more fortunate; and the satisfaction of success to some extent makes up for the trouble of carrying a heavy buck between us some eight miles back under an alr-ady burning sun.

Apart from this, the long walk has not been wasted. The country is lovely, resembling—with due allowance for the difference in the character of the trees and the sharp clearness of the atmosphere—a beautiful English park. The early air is fresh and invigorating to a degree, and that glorious, vivifying sunshine, the absence of which proves such a trial on a return to England, renders one full of spring and life.

A lovely bird is to be seen here in quantities, similar to one found in parts of the Cape Colony, namely, the blue jay; it is of a beautiful heliotrope colour on the breast, dashed with an occasional pointed feather of lighter hue; the wings are brilliantly coloured, blue predominating. The black and white crow is very common, and the great eagle

floats at a high altitude above us, calm and wary, until a bullet passing close to him causes him to realise for once that there exist in this world things "undreamt of in *his* philosophy." Here and there a covey of partridges rises out of the grass, and a pheasant sneaks behind a bush, only to be disturbed and fall a victim to a taste for game.

Everywhere are to be seen the spoor and droppings of buck, though mostly small ones. The flies exasperate one, and result in forgiveness for the great black and white spiders which stretch their huge webs across the path. These are actually a nuisance sometimes, particularly when stalking game; for the supporting cables from which the rest of the web is slung are wonderfully thick and strong, and, amber in colour, are sometimes fifteen or twenty feet in length.

The enemies of the smaller birds are seen in great variety in the form of many kinds of hawks; and the doves, which are so numerous all over Rhodesia, alternate with lovely little parrakeets in flashing across our path.

By this time the veldt is nearly dry, for the sun has evaporated the heavy night dew which conveniently takes the place of rain and renders it possible for vegetation to exist during the long

period when no rain falls. Would that some such arrangement could be made in England !

One of the American scouts who proved so serviceable during the war, did admirable work before the Bembisi, for, riding in advance of the column, he ascertained that the bush was crammed with Kaffirs, who followed him with pertinacity. Had the original intention of following the old hunters' track through the bush been carried out, it is probable that a calamity would have occurred, whereas the path taken skirting the bush, not only saved them from attack under the worst conditions, but enabled them to take up an excellent position when the attack did come.

The coach which is to take me on to Gwelo is heralded by a cloud of dust on the horizon, and the passengers prove to be in a state of considerable apprehension on account of the rickety condition of the vehicle. This time it is not a saloon coach, but a light wagon body fitted with a roof, and with hard wooden seats placed transversely. This one has apparently seen considerable service, for both body and wheels are rickety, one wheel being a source of particular anxiety to all, the spokes being loose, the hub split, and the bush worn out. At intervals it is taken off, delaying us seriously, and every awkward "drift" across a river, or rough bit of road, makes

passengers wear a comical look of anxiety, while preparations are made for a smash or capsize—no laughing matter when travelling at full speed down a bank.

Our passengers include one or two characters of some personal interest, one being the brother of an eminent novelist, and the other an old hunter who has been for years in the country, and who now, worn by exposure, is credited with having killed more natives in his time than any other European in the country. But this may be romance, though it is without doubt true that some few men have treated the Kaffirs in their employ with tyranny and cruelty, even when the exasperating and often dangerous lapses, insolence or desertion, do not give a shadow of an excuse for such behaviour. The consequence is, that some enterprises are now suffering from the character which they have earned in earlier days in the eyes of the natives, and find difficulty in obtaining labour. Natives must be treated very firmly, and receive punishment for delinquencies, but while they are quick to resent injustice, as a rule they will bear no malice if their punishment is justly deserved.

Much of the country passed through is excellent, and a considerable number of farms have been "pegged out" in various localities. There is much

less thorn than in many parts already traversed, and a good deal of "mahobi-hobi," a wood useful in hut-building, inasmuch as it is less subject to the ravages of white ants and "borers"; the "mopani" tree, so much seen in malarial districts, is entirely absent. Occasionally the "Kaffir orange" tree (or "datura") is seen, destitute of leaves at this time of year, but yet bearing the large green fruit, the skin of which is as hard as the skin of an ostrich shell. It is said that there are two varieties of this fruit, one of which is poisonous, also that it requires a Kaffir to discriminate between them without experiment, so much alike are they.

A characteristic of the district beyond the Shangani is the small number of Kaffirs inhabiting it. It appears that it was rather too far away from Bulawayo for continual occupation save by advanced Matabele outposts such as the Isukamini and Movein Kraals, and much too near the Matabele for Mashona tribes to live in safety, the original inhabitants having been extirpated or driven away.

The Shangani battlefield is graced by a store which a few months later is the scene of a massacre by revolted Matabele. This battlefield is situated in an open space practically surrounded by bush, and bounded on the north-east by the Shangani river, the drift over which in summer must be somewhat

difficult, for we find for a considerable distance the road passes over deep dongas with thick bush.

The following is an account of the battle by a friend of mine who was a participant in it; it illustrates the mistaken tactics of the Kaffirs in not attacking while the column was on the march or hindered from laagering up when in the act of crossing the drift.

“The next day we arrived at Shangani. There were any amount of kraals here (*amongst these would be Fingen, one of the headquarters of the revolt of 1896*). Raiding parties were sent out to burn and destroy and to capture cattle. We crossed the river and laagered up, taking what we thought was a first-class position. I was captain of the day and at night when I posted the pickets I told all the natives more in fun than anything else that they must be awfully careful as the Matabele were going to attack us. The different raiding patrols came in, and we had close on or a little over a thousand head of cattle. B. was out with one party and did not come in till late, in fact so late that we had to fire rockets, which I dare say in the event saved the lives of a good many of us. I visited the pickets about 9.30 and turned in later. We were all awakened by guns going off all round and the bullets flying over our heads. I must say the men

turned out very smartly, and got on to the wagons. By this time the fun had commenced and such a noise I never heard before, bugles blowing, Maxims, Hotchkiss, Gardners and Martinis firing away as hard as they could. All our pickets got in safely, but how it was they were not shot I cannot say. The firing slackened off and it was very certain that the Matabele, who were all round us, had retired for a little. I was sent out in the dark with half a troop to see if the pickets were all right. I was very nearly cut off, but one of the Maxims saw the Kaffirs stealing on me and so fired and turned them. I could not see anyone, it was so dark. It was a dangerous mission for mounted men to be sent out in the dark where thousands of niggers could have been concealed behind the bushes, but with my usual luck I got off safely. At daylight they came on again, and again we beat them off. H. was sent out on one way and myself another, to pursue, but the country was very unfavourable, being nothing but kopjes, which was simply filled with Matabele, all armed with Martinis. I got among a deuce of a lot with about twenty men, and after we had killed some and lost three of our horses I was forced to retire, H. having done so some little time before. I went again, and then they cleared out further back into the hills. They now retired generally, but only

for a little time, when they returned once more, only to be beaten off a third time. This was the last.

"They stood off three or four thousand yards, but were greatly surprised when a shell from the seven pounder dropped amongst them, killing some. It was very funny, for as soon as the shell burst they all fired at it; what they thought it was I don't know. We now patrolled the whole country and as everything was reported clear we moved laager into more open country, where there were fewer kopjes surrounding us.

"We had a few men wounded here, only one fatally, and one colonial boy killed. I don't know how many we killed, all I know is, that I went round after and saw a great many dead. We caught a prisoner, and he told us the names of all the impis engaged against us, and the names of a lot of leaders whom we had killed. We reckoned that five thousand were there—there must have been a great many to have surrounded us as they did.

"The start was made by the Matabele falling in amongst our Mashonas, who were herding the cattle. They played old gooseberry with these, ripping them up in the most awful way, men, women (captured by us) and children; brains and blood all over the place. There were also some Matabele lying dead among the Mashonas.

"Our prisoner told us that the idea with the Matabele was not to fire a shot, but to rush on the laager with their assegais; they were very foolish not to have done so, as they would have got much nearer in the dark. He said that as they were advancing one of the men let his gun off by mistake, and this started them all off. He also said that they were ready to attack us early in the night, but when we fired the rockets they got frightened; they said we were talking to God. (These were the rockets we fired to let B. know the position of the camp.)"

The Shangani district is a very promising gold-field, and this is shown to have been known to the ancient occupiers of the country by the existence of considerable ruins about twenty miles north, I think of the name of "Momba," which contain indications of connection with the gold mining which appears to have been carried on so generally all over the country.

We get no sleep that night, save what is possible when leaning one's head forward almost into the lap, in the jolting, swinging coach; leaning back is impossible, there being no back to the wooden seat—or rather plank—laid across the spring wagon.

The team after the first two or three stages is composed of trotting oxen, these being less expen-

sive to keep than mules. The bad condition of the coach and the shortness of mules (two of ours break down through overwork after doing a long twenty-five mile stage) is due to the present mail contract coming to an end, and the contractor feeling pretty sure that it will not come to him again, so things go almost as they please.



GWELO TOWNSHIP.

The third day after leaving Bulawayo the "city" of Gwelo makes its welcome appearance, and the sight of it is hailed with pleasure, albeit it is mainly

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only a collection of mud houses. There are certain exceptions to the world of mud, though, for a brick store and a marvellous brick gaol give dignity to the "city." This brick gaol at present contains a solitary Kaffir prisoner, who has a comfortable time of it on the whole, not being obliged to put an excessive amount of energy into his work ; the black gaoler has the best of the fun, however, for he has attained the summit of his ambition—an official position, in virtue of which he can swagger around with immense importance, carrying his rifle. He follows at the heels of the prisoner the whole time, with an assumption of intense dignity sheltering the slowness and laziness of his pace.

A wooden building serves the purpose of a post-office, mining commissioner's office, police-court, and magistrate's chambers ; the fact that there are only four rooms to accommodate these services is likely to result in separate buildings being furnished for the administration of justice or for the mining commissioner, though the present room is a palace compared with the first one enjoyed by the mining commissioner. This yet stands near by, and is simply a large, hollow haycock with a door to it !

The camp is situated on ground sloping from the long kopje, which is a prominent landmark for many miles, to the Gwelo river, tributary to the Shangani.

It shelters about fifty individuals, and possesses four hotels, two bakers, one mineral water manufacturer, one billiard room (!), eight general stores, and the necessary doctor. Besides these, there is a floating population alternating between the goldfields and the



THE FIRST GOVERNMENT OFFICE, GWELO.

camp, in which latter place a good many engage themselves in keeping drunk.

Business ought to increase steadily in Gwelo, for it is the natural centre of a number of mining

districts. At present its most enthusiastic admirer would not consider it an exciting home.

Its time came in a few months, be it said, for it was then menaced by the remainder of the crack regiments of the late Lobengula's army, and several of its citizens lost their lives at the murderous hands of the rebel Matabele. The excitement of expeditions against the Insukamini and Movein kraals, with Mr. Rhodes leading, made Gwelo for the time being practically the cynosure of the world's eyes.

The central position of Gwelo gives a varied choice of districts to be visited, the Sebakwe, Movein, Shangani, and Selukwe being the most important. The last named appears the most advisable to visit, as it would enable a short cut to be made onward to Victoria, though the means of proceeding past Selukwe are not apparent.

Even the means of travelling to Selukwe are questionable at the moment. Once a week a "Scotch cart" and oxen takes the mail over; but, as usual, the vehicle is unsafe and rickety, prone to upset on the bad portions of the road, and possessed of an iron bottom, which reflects the heat intensely. Last trip the cart upset three times on the road. I long for a wagon of my own, that I can be independent of public conveyances, and do the journey comfortably. There is nothing to be hired,

so the only alternative to remaining in Gwelo until the next mail day is to do the twenty-seven miles on foot, with Kaffirs to carry the baggage.

Accordingly, "boys" are obtained, and a start is made at daybreak. I carry my gun, as buck are to be found in the district, and a large herd of tsessebe have been seen within a few hours, one appearing later at various dinner tables. Sable antelope and wildebeest are also seen occasionally, though it is necessary to go some distance into the bush before they are met with. One of the attributes of such an excursion is a charming uncertainty as to what one will see, how to choose one's path when others diverge from it, when the midday meal shall come, and even where the night's rest will be taken.

My carriers are glorious in ragged shirts, monkey skins in front, and Dame Nature's breeches; it is noticeable that one wears sandals of leather. They are all abominably ugly heathen, probably Makalanga, but good natured and strong, and ready to laugh on the slightest provocation.

My native vocabulary is inevitably exceedingly limited, but the few words picked up already prove sufficient to convey my meaning with an extensive use of the language of signs, which Kaffirs are often quick to grasp, and even make it possible for quite

extended conversations to take place. The gun on my shoulder becomes wonderfully heavy as the hours pass, but I feel quite ashamed of myself for feeling it so, when I look at the youngest of my Kaffirs, quite a small boy, carrying my big parcel of rugs, guncase, and his own cooking pots so easily, balanced on his head.

Mile after mile we trudge on, I in front, and my miniature caravan tailing off in the rear; I keep a sharp look out for my longed for buck, which obstinately declines to show up.

My boys have grown silent by eight o'clock, and my feet begin to tell me that it would be well to stop the steady tramp which we have kept up for so long, especially as the sun is already uncomfortably warm. I throw myself on to the ground beneath a tree, tell the boys to make a fire and boil some water in my iron kettle (worth sixpence at home, but bought for four and sixpence in Gwelo). How the cup of tea which follows is enjoyed, no one can tell who has not tramped ten miles over the African veldt under a tropical sun.

The cup leaves my lips quickly though, for not far from my resting place I hear a grotesque imitation of the words, "Who are yo-o-o-o-o-u," in a tone of indignant surprise. This is soon followed by another voice in another direction, this time for all the world

like a petulant two-year-old suffering from toothache, saying in drawling accents, "Go a-w-a-a-y." I feel quite surprised at this discouraging reception by two members of the feathered world, for it proves to be fowls of the air, that give me notice to quit in most plainly enunciated terms.

Sometimes we cross great open plains with the grass up to our shoulders, and at other places thick bush surrounds us. How greatly one is impressed with the wild loneliness of this unrestrained forest nature, especially when one's companions are but a few savages, whose life and mental constitution are so different as to almost place them in another world to ours.

In places are seen great crops of quartz, or of unmistakeable iron ore.

The wild effect of the scenery is somewhat discounted at one stage by the appearance of a man on horseback, gently cantering out of the thick bush ahead of us; and, though he disappears almost directly, the feeling of solitude and loneliness before felt is disturbed. Signs of occupation and desertion are once more manifest some distance off the road, where a windlass, indicating a shaft sunk on a quartz reef, gives evidence of a prospector's work. No person is visible, though, and the huts near by are deserted and fallen in.

I begin to think that the farm I am making my way to is far indeed, when, down in the valley we are descending, a large herd of Matabele cattle appear, slowly wending their way towards us; all are small animals, save two or three imported ones, and in sleek and good condition. I learn afterwards that they are four hundred in number, and as they lazily stroll up the meadows, their naked herds behind, they form a perfect adjunct to the lovely panorama of wooded hills and valleys just opening up before us.

Tired and hot, we are searching everywhere for the longed-for farm, when I observe a cattle track branching off to the right. It is a rather risky speculation to take this path, for it might lead us miles out of the way to some feeding ground, and after going half a mile or so, and getting into a long deep valley, shut in by wooded hills on every side, and which apparently faces in a totally different direction to the road we had left, I begin to think I have made a mistake, especially as the farm was said to be near a direct track, which is apparently being left behind.

We walk steadily onwards down the valley in single file, and suddenly catch sight of the sun shining on something light coloured and conical, wee, and high up on the hill at the end of the valley.

Even then I am uncertain whether or not it be a native kraal, and I ask the boys if it be "mulungu (white man) or mabantu (Kaffir) kaiea (house)." They express an opinion that it is "lo inkosi kaiea," and I feel relieved. Nevertheless, it is a weary walk even to the foot of the hill, and a considerable climb before we reach the farm huts at the top, and feel that we can at least rest awhile before making our way onward, for we have now covered about fourteen miles, and the best of the day is yet unspent.

I look inside one hut, at a Kaffir girl's suggestion, and therein find the hunter, who has passed so many years in this country, and who, whether accompanying Selous or on his own lonely journeys, has been the hero of many adventures. Hospitably invited to enter, I am regaled with a delicious cup of fresh milk and an awful lump of hard salt junk and heavy damper. What did I care?—I enjoyed all—the milk was the best part of it, but the salt junk and damper might have been king's food, so pressing was the aching void. Invited to stay the night, I make the acquaintance of "Charlie," one of Selous' boys, who had been with him in that awful experience in the country of the Mashukulumbwe, across the Zambesi, when the camp was attacked at night, and all, Selous especially, escaped with bare life.

My friend is a typical wanderer, he has the reticence and quietness of one long used to solitude and the wilds, combined with a genial kindheartedness. I feel inclined to speculate on the duration in his case of the slumber of the nomadic instinct which is part of the composition of so many of our nationality, and which increases with its gratification. A farm in Matabeleland, even, is somewhat of a tie, and certainly its freedom cannot be compared with the complete irresponsibility of a long trek away from the comparative civilisation of the farm or the nearest camp.

Yet even here it is wild enough, for much game still is to be found, and, six months ago, a rash lioness with her cubs visited the vicinity and was shot by my host in the valley I have just traversed, within five hundred yards of the farm huts. Her skull adorns the hut. The cubs were killed later and I am shown a skin which purported to be one of them.

I stroll around the corn lands with him, sampling the luscious melons as I go, and, later, the question arises as to where I shall sleep. One hut is used as a dining room, it has no door and only a low hurdle to keep the pigs out, these omnivorous animals being permitted free progress round the huts; the fowls, being provided with wings, fare better in this respect and roost in it, so the wagon is suggested;

this I respectfully decline as the before mentioned slave girl also inhabits it. Finally I lie down in my sheepskin rug on the cowdung-smeared floor of my host's own hut, also inhabited by an odd fowl or two and a couple of dogs. Certainly, before retiring we kill a centipede, and also, close by, a two foot long snake, but I sleep well enough until the fowls arouse me before daybreak by answering the "cock-a-doodle-doos" of their companions outside.

I am glad to be aroused early, so the presence of these scuffling room-mates is useful, though bad for the temper.

For the first time I am confronted with mealie-meal porridge as an article of my diet, and admit that its chief characteristic lies in its satisfying qualities. How the Kaffirs can shovel down the quantities they do and then want more appears to me incomprehensible; truly their capacity is enormous. Even the delicious fresh milk, which they dispense with, fails to enable me to effect a material reduction of the heap on my plate, and I fail to understand the power of the Kaffir to find Elysian joys in the continual consumption of pound after pound of this dense semi-elastic substance.

In the brilliancy of this grand sunshine and atmosphere I take leave of my hospitable friend, diving into the low valleys which constitute a portion

of the lovely scene spread out before the camp. I had saved a full mile by leaving the road the day before, for it took a long bend after I left it.

Eight-thirty is late to start, for the sun, even in winter, is marvellously powerful soon after sunrise, and now it is correspondingly hard walking. Enclosed by steep hills the sun's rays seem concentrated and pour unmercifully down on our heads, to the satisfaction of the hatless Kaffirs rather than otherwise, for they appear to revel in heat, however great, and though their black backs are almost like mirrors with the perspiration, they walk ahead as fast as I, cheerfully laughing and joking.

The scenery is now universally pretty, probably among the finest in Rhodesia. The trees, however, are disappointing, being seldom large and not very shady, though a few varieties attain a considerably greater height than the average. One of the latter shells off its thin bark in small patches, for all the world like some of the gum trees of Australia.

The "Mahobi-hobi" trees have large leaves, but their foliage, like all the rest does not seem excessively abundant, certainly not luxuriant. Yet there is such a crowd of trees, and the grass is so long, that it is easy to believe that the biggest game might be near, yet absolutely unperceived.

Flir-r-r go a covey of partridges from under my feet, and I drop a couple before they have gone far, much to my boys' delight. The finding of them is a very different affair, and it is only after a long search in the thick grass that a game supper can be counted upon. A good dog is a treasure in such country, but they are rare.

Half way to Selukwe we skirt a large "vley," filled with tall reeds; these are often very soft and dangerous, and engulf any adventurous spirit who may brave them, either in search of game, or for the purpose of grass cutting. Several Kaffirs have met their deaths at this particular spot during the last few months.

As we ascend the heat grows greater, and when we get on to some open country on the top of the hill it becomes almost unbearable, and one longs for a stream whereat to quench the raging thirst engendered. "Icona amanzi" (no water), say the Kaffirs, and it is sad fact! But the whole country is here extended before our eyes, and even a parched throat cannot yet abate the enthusiasm which the lovely scene gives rise to. Even the hills, whereon lies the camp which has so recently afforded the night's shelter, seem pettifogging in the distance, and we can see miles upon miles of wood-covered stretches and yellow open plains alternately,

streaming past island kopjes and melting into blue distance beyond.

Barring the path, and setting a limit to the broad expansive veldt we are leaving behind, is a long range of blue hills, jagged and irregular ; but at one spot there appears a breach in the otherwise unbroken breastwork of hills, showing a sudden, deep cleft or pass, which I recognise as being Sebanga Poort, the entrance to the Selukwe gold-fields.

Plodding steadily onwards toward the longed-for head waters of the Umtebekwe river, we reach the Poort itself, narrow and thick with trees ; not a breath stirs, and, the granite rocks on the cliffs on either hand reflect the intense heat of an African mid-day.

Throwing myself down beneath a tree, anywhere out of the scorching sun, I despatch one of the boys for water, and taking advantage of the dry wood collected by some previous traveller, soon have the kettle boiling, though the water is very yellow and thick. Still, the tea hides the alien flavour, and after a meal of "bully" beef, the heat of the day is passed half asleep.

Then comes the prettiest and hardest part of the walk. Nature had at one time, in a spiteful mood, done her best to wreck this portion of the earth by

means of rupture and upheaval, and then, relenting, had clothed it in trees and flowers. Certainly the changes of mood have proved excellent in the scenic effects resulting, but at the end of a long walk five or six miles of rough and tumble travelling need much compensation.

Finally I find myself in the company of five or six young Englishmen, and, in spite of the eternal mud hut, in surroundings of comfort and civilisation.

CHAPTER IV.

GOLD MINING, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

THERE is virtue, much virtue, in cowdung, as many a traveller has discovered. The mansion which shelters me for several nights is built of cowdung and floored with the same material. This invaluable commodity has the attribute of forming a useful alloy with mud, the mixture having a peculiar quality of impermeability and adhesiveness, combined with hardness when dry. To keep the floor fresh and sweet it must be weekly smeared with fresh cowdung—it is both healthy and clean. The Matabele often add a quantity of bullock's blood, which forms a hard, black surface capable of taking a good polish.

My hut is circular, and in its fœcal walls are a hundred saplings, their lower extremities fixed in the ground. A tree, stripped of its bark, supports in the centre a roof formed of many other peeled saplings, less happy than their interned, vertical comrades in the walls. Less happy, because the circular cone they form resounds with the busy

gnawing of the square-headed "borer" beetle, and they are thereby dogged by a fate which is continually reducing their substance to a white floury dust, now lying thick on the objects below.

These many victims, huddling close their extremities at the apex as if for mutual defence; are bound together by pliable bark ties or hide thongs, and support, as clearly seen through the interstices, a roof-covering of coarse and lengthy grass. The edifice boasts of a window, one which the pioneers of Africa and America are well accustomed to. The woad-stained natives of early Britain were not far behind these present-day pioneers in their method of admitting light, for the window is but twelve inches square, and has a single pane—of calico.

Lines of a red clay running irregularly over some of the posts indicate that the white ant is beginning its ravages, which cause many a solid-looking tree trunk to crumble into dust as it is touched. This is the extraordinary provision of nature for aiding the process of decay in a country where that process is prevented from being so rapid by the great dryness of the atmosphere during a great portion of the year. Inspection will show that many a tree, of which the trunk is sound and healthy, gives support to a line of these clay galleries, but further observation

will inevitably show a decayed branch, which is being gradually reduced to a mere shell by the appetites of these voracious insects.

The door being low, one steps under the thick grass eaves to enter, and comfort may be found in



A MINING CAMP; SELUKWE.

this cowdung house. There are no awkward angles, and in the fifty feet of circumference there is room for more furniture than one might think possible. The bedstead—for I now attain to that luxury—is made of poles, with lashings of raw hide thongs in

place of the flat iron strips of Birmingham. The drawbacks of the arrangements are that without a mattress the hide lashings are liable to leave a pattern on one's body on rising, and, unless the roof be ceiled with calico (a luxury attainable by the wealthy), one finds the eyes choked with the dust from the borers above, for these industrious destroyers apparently never cease work.

One night I open the door (in many cases consisting of a reed mat hung down from the top) and stroll out before finally turning in. The atmosphere is clear and balmy, fresh and warm, with no trace of damp or bitter touch, such as is perceptible in the loveliest of English nights. All around are the various huts of the camp, scattered closely irregular round the sloping clearing, thickly surrounded with trees. Close below are the great, dark forms of meditative oxen, heavy and motionless, and a few yards away a wagon with a smouldering fire near it ; a group of recumbent Kaffirs stir uneasily in their sleep as I slowly pass by.

The whole scene is unreal, for the full moon is high, and where its light strikes, renders everything of one even, silvery tone, with much detail, certainly, in near objects, but dim and flat through lack of contrast.

Earlier in the evening the happy Kaffirs, round the

fires of their encampment on the hillside just over the narrow valley, have been singing songs—weird songs—sung by unmistakably savage voices, ringing across to us through the trees to wend their echoing way down the many branching valleys, all in the darkness of the night.

One strange quality the Kaffir voice has above all other voices, that of carrying long distances; miles away on a still night, as one sits by one's gloom-surrounded camp fire, or plods an uncertain way with a bullock wagon in the coolness of the starlight, may be heard short music phrases with sometimes a dash of Moody and Sankey in their rhythm, a chorus of three notes being repeated after each stanza by scores of resonant voices.

Seated on the top of a steep hill, on the side of which our camp is built, I hear an invisible Kaffir engaged in chopping wood on a neighbouring hill which is separated from my position by a sudden valley some seven or eight hundred feet in depth; to join him would entail a walk of a couple of miles, but as he sings his short stanzas—certainly not more than a dozen notes in each—his voice is so clear that were he English I should easily distinguish his words. This fact may explain in some degree the astonishing rapidity with which Kaffir news travels, for on many an occasion news

has reached English ears through native channels, long before the resources of civilisation could bring it.

The scenery in this district is probably some of the finest in the country ; it is all sudden hills and deep valleys, so that in the course of a short walk one may find oneself a thousand feet below the starting place. But the strangest characteristic of the country is the air of ancient occupation of this wild country by mortals who knew some degree of civilisation, were as enterprising as we—perhaps more so—and over whom the power of gold, whether directly or otherwise, was as real and strong as it is over the people of the nineteenth century.

Scattered all over this district are to be seen lines of old “workings,” with heaps of excavated rock ; in one place these follow the gold-bearing reef for fully three thousand feet, and in some wonderful way these mysterious beings, showing considerable skill in mining, have followed the reef downwards and onwards from the surface, filling in the space emptied behind them with the *débris* as they progressed, and attaining often to a depth of seventy to eighty feet, and in one case to over a hundred. With few exceptions in the whole country, there is no remaining trace of timbering, and in its absence (which is problematical) how they would manage to

prevent the walls on either side of their narrow trench from collapsing is incomprehensible ; but it is possible (say some) that they trusted to the firmness of the rock only, for it appears that in some instances where moderately loose ground has been come on, the workings have stopped. It has also been reported that fragments of skeletons have been found in one district, the miners probably having been overwhelmed by collapsing ground. Water also appears to have been too much for them, for the workings again come to an end in places where it appears in any quantity.

On the course of one line of old workings I see a shaft about six feet square and still thirty feet deep ; what its original depth was is not yet known, for it is obviously partly filled up with *débris*.

In other places great holes or excavations in the hillside are visible, probably where the outcrop has occurred ; but perhaps the strangest fact of all is that, with hardly one trustworthy exception, these people have left no other trace of themselves than the ruins and fortifications scattered over the country. No kind of habitation is to be found on these mines, their absence being adduced by some as an argument that the huts were of the native character—that is, of wood and mud—and that therefore the miners themselves would be native, and

not, as has at any rate latterly been thought, aliens come from other countries.

Traces of the methods employed in working the reef are occasionally visible, such as remnants of charcoal, which was used for heating the face of the reef, preparatory to dashing cold water on to it in order to crack and splinter the quartz away from the main body; and it is probable that, save at the great centres, such as Zimbabwe, Momba (near the Shangani), the Khami River (near Bulawayo), those on the Sabi, &c., &c., the miners' habitations were similar to the present native ones. The nearest stone buildings are certainly not far away, but consist of fortifications on the top of the Gwelo kopje, twenty-seven miles away.

Again, Mr. Selous points out that iron implements were found in a drive near Tati, the roof of which was actually supported by native hewn logs, and though I know of no iron or other implements having been found in the Selukwe district, pick marks are plainly visible. An exception to the general rule that no timbering remains have been found in an "ancient" mine within reach of Gwelo, the "Phoenix," I believe in the Movein district, where a slanting reef has been taken out to a considerable depth, the hanging wall being supported by regular timbering, which is supplemented by other placed along the

floor, the object of this being, apparently, to prevent loose stones from falling on those below. This information is gathered from several who have seen and descended the workings. It appears unlikely that such timber would endure through thousands of years, and points to a continuance of the art of goldmining, after its initiation by an alien race, up to a comparatively recent date, and this is confirmed by the existence of two bark and wicker buckets in first class order, which I have seen in the possession of a gentleman at Gwelo, who found them at the bottom of some old workings which might have been accessible to Mashonas.

The general rarity of tools and implements cannot easily be accounted for, and even these buckets, which are fully three feet six high, the body being made of a roll of bark and the top and bottom being wickerwork cones, might have been thrown down the workings by Mashonas in flight from the Matabele, their original use being to carry grain from the fields, so that, though from the situation in which they were found it might naturally be inferred that they were used for mining purposes, there are abundant possibilities that their presence in the workings was a purely fortuitous circumstance.

Or, again, it may corroborate Mr. Selous' theory that the alien race became merged into the Kaffir

one, some of the arts of the former descending, though in a deteriorated form. One find I made while at Gwelo, consisting of a fragment of pottery lying in an ancient "drive" some fifty-five yards in length, which had been recently uncovered, but the mouth of which had evidently been blocked by falls of earth for many years. This fragment is almost identical with the Kaffir pottery of the present day, in regard to shape and ornamentation.

Of the stone ruins only Zimbabwe can be said to have been searched or examined in a systematic and scientific fashion, for the company which has been granted the exclusive right to search for gold within them can hardly be expected to devote time and money to other work than the recovery of the buried treasure which it has already been achieving with considerable success. It will, therefore, be hoped by antiquarians and archæologists that an organised and detailed search may be made under the authority of the Chartered Company, so that, if it exist at all, some key may be found which will indubitably lay bare the mystery of the identity of the early visitors or immigrants, whichever they may be.

That the Barotsi, a section of which tribe was driven by the Matabele from Mashonaland, may have been connected with the work is an opinion held by some, owing to various patterns and designs being

common to the ancients' work and that of the Barotsi; and I have also been informed that there exists yet a remnant of this tribe a considerable distance north-east of Victoria, which yet retains, or has until recent years, the art of cutting and fitting stones for the purpose of building walls. My informant tells me that they actually claim that their ancestors built Zimbabwe at a time when they once dominated the whole country, but such information as this is not much to be trusted, for the reason that Kaffirs have little legendary lore or idea of history. This cannot be greatly wondered at considering their migratory character and the number of times that the race dominant in the district at a given period has given way before more powerful invaders.

It is interesting, also, to learn that gold ornaments of considerable merit in workmanship have recently been brought by a gentleman from the Zambesi, they being of native manufacture. The beads, necklaces and spiral springs which have from time to time been found in the various ruins of Mashonaland, and these modern articles may therefore perhaps be regarded as having a common ethnological ancestry.

To return to the present day. I am shown instances at seventy or eighty feet deep where a drive has cut through the reef only to find that it is filled and packed tight with *débris* instead of gold-

bearing quartz; and this occurs even at a hundred feet in another place, probably reaching the water level at the bottom of the valley, thirty feet deeper.

When at the Dunraven mine I am pressed by some miners to take their photographs; a fourth does not appear, he having lately given way to that far from rare failing termed "going on the bust." I am shocked to hear a few hours later that he had been blown to pieces by a late charge of dynamite. He entered the drive too soon after the shots had been fired, and one being late he arrived on the scene just as it exploded. He lies in a little enclosure on the hill by the side of a previous victim to incaution and disregard of rules.

The names adopted by the Kaffirs (their own being often quite unpronounceable) cause many a laugh. They are sometimes christened after the great men of the land—Rhodes, Jameson, or Willoughby—at another time one may hear a black savage call another "Funnyface," the English words seeming incongruous in the midst of a string of strange syllables.

This particular "boy," Funnyface, is a character. On his first arrival at the camp in search of work he described himself, with much waving of lanky arms and exercise of loose joints and rolling eyes, as an experienced miner. Two days after he came to the

"Baas" (the rock being very hard where he was put to work) and unblushingly said that he had told a lie in the first instance, that he had never been in a mine before and knew nothing of the work. This might have been enough to send him about his business had he been anyone else, but his droll face and manner stood him in good stead. "I like you well enough," said he, "and don't particularly want to leave you, so I will take a job on the surface (this work being much easier and less remunerative), and work my way up from the lowest position." This he did, and now receives the highest remuneration a surface man can get, earning by his cheerful oddities the goodwill of his masters and companions. Funnyface will run into Gwelo and back—a full fifty-four miles—during the day, bringing the mail back, and think nothing of it. He has an inexhaustible fund of quaint humour, is quite eccentric, and is worth his money if only for the reason that he keeps the other boys in good temper, which means a good deal in the case of African blacks.

I am often reminded of Drummond's account of mimicry in nature as described in "Tropical Africa," by the sight of various mimetic insects common here.

Strolling along a beaten track, the path sometimes seems to be covered with small rolling pebbles,

hastily scattering in every direction. This is in reality a small stone-coloured beetle, which runs about on the slightest provocation and with excessive energy. A tree-lizard may look in at one's hut door, smacking its lips over a recently swallowed fly; the tree it affects has a spotted, silvery bark, and the lizard has a spotted, silvery skin. Looking at my feet, one day, I see a large specimen of the "Praying Mantis," vulgarly called the "Kaffir God." It is much like a wisp of thick grass, with bent offshoots for legs, and is provided with embryo wings, which resemble short pieces of the dry sheath out of which a stem of grass shoots. A very similar one is found in New Zealand, but the wings there appear to be more fully developed than in the African variety. The name "Praying Mantis" is due to its extraordinary action when walking or about to walk. The thorax portion is attached to the long abdomen by a sort of universal joint, permitting it to turn upwards, downwards, and sideways. The first pair of its six legs is placed quite close to the back of the head, and when starting to walk, or in a state of mental indecision, to make sure of its way it lifts its thorax upward and from side to side, waving its front legs as if it were a parson blessing a congregation of imaginary manti.

There are many chameleons about, and many

specimens of the common butterfly who shuts his wings in order to persuade one that he is a leaf, the resemblance being striking.

The butterflies generally are truly lovely, and abound, as also does a large flying beetle, which makes such an angry buzzing noise that, as he passes near one on his swift flight, one involuntarily shrinks if the approach be too near.

The "Scavenger" beetle is often seen, and sometimes may be found in the act of rolling a spherical mass of dung into a satisfactory place, where it may sink it into the ground and lay its eggs in the warmth-producing mass. It is quite a comical sight to see this (large) beetle rolling a mass five times as big as itself, its method being to stand on its front legs and kick the ball backwards with its hind ones.

Snakes, both imaginary and real, are often seen, the python, mamba, and ringkos being the most common, but as compared with Australia they are by no means numerous.

One day an intelligent band of Kaffirs came applying for "sebenza" (work), the ordinary wage paid being about twenty-five shillings a month, with three pounds of meal per diem as food. Much fun was extracted in the process of giving them names. One being appealed to with great deference by the







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others, it appeared that he was the chief of the party, and he did all the talking. Name after name he suggested, as each boy came forward, "Sikispence" being a favourite, but each had already a counterpart in the mine; finally all were suited, one being named "Tick" (his rendering of "Dick,") and another "Inkomo" (cow). However, the latter objected to being named after a female thing, but accepted with a grin of pleasure the name "Inkabi" (bullock).

I tried my utmost to purchase a prettily worked snuffbox from one, but he said that he could not part with it on any account, as his "intomba" (girl, or sweetheart) had given it to him, and would certainly demand an explanation when he returned as to what he had done with her keepsake.

The musical (!) instrument commonly seen could be easily mistaken at first sight for an amateur bow, minus arrows. It has one string, pinched by the "musician" to alter the note, and on the back of the bow is lashed a calabash, which acts as a very necessary sounding board. The whole contrivance is remarkable for its inefficiency for producing sound, of any character even, let alone music. Some boys are seldom seen without one in their hands, the end being lightly placed between the teeth, so as to convey the sound better to their ears.

Many tribes are represented in the camp ; Makalaka, Makalanga, Matabele, Shangaan, and a few Zambesi boys, the last named being distinguished by the absence of their front teeth, which gives them a somewhat sinister aspect. I noticed that Funnyface had the same brand, but he indignantly denied that he was a Zambesi boy ; saying that he had been caught when very young by a Zambesi tribe, who had considered that he was too good looking, and endeavoured to make him one of themselves so far as outward appearances go. He was very much ashamed of the trade mark.

The coach I should have taken to proceed on my way to Victoria fails me for some reason, and I find it necessary to make up my mind to take the long tramp across country with a retinue of Kaffirs. This will save a long and tedious coach journey, but will mean a further walk of about eighty miles, making about one hundred and seven from Gwelo. I make every effort to buy a horse or a donkey ; but, in the former case, the would-be vendor is "on the bust," and is too drunk to negotiate, while no donkeys are available. This I discover on my way to Sebang Poort, where I climb one of the sides of the gap a couple of hundred feet above the plain. A glorious view is hence obtained, on one side over the plain as far as Gwelo, the kopje being just visible in the

distance ; and in the other direction (for the upheaval is as clearly and abruptly drawn as a coast line) the far away Victoria ranges can be distinguished at a lower elevation, their lofty tops peeping over the adjacent Selukwe Hills.

The morning of my departure I note a slender, creeping thing, grey and hairy, crawling up my doorpost. Closer examination shows it to be composed of twenty large caterpillars, following on each others' heels and touching each other, as though they were intensely near sighted and feared that if they lost absolute touch with each other they would infallibly get lost. These caterpillars attain a large size, and are very plentiful ; they form a great delicacy with the Kaffirs, who squeeze out their contents and cook the skins, hair and all.

My friend tells me, on my making known to him my intention to take the bull by the horns and *walk* to Victoria, that " You will probably get fever, you will have to sleep out of doors, and your Kaffirs may give you trouble, in which case you will find yourself in a fix, as there is not a white man the whole eighty miles ; and, besides, you may have difficulty in finding your way." A happy-go-lucky disposition prevails, and, mustering my gang of Kaffirs, I set out.

To describe my small caravan : Johnnie is a

smiling and well built young Shangaan, whom I make my "head man," with instructions that he is to "boss up" the four others. These are poor creatures, undersized and villainous looking, but two carry my Gladstone bag, weighing over eighty pounds, slung on a pole between them, another carries seventy pounds' weight of mealie meal (a diminishing quantity) on his head, while the last carries my large handbag and their cooking pots. Johnnie is laden with my rugs, empty guncase, coat, and camera, to say nothing of his own dignity, which is considerable. He is also entrusted with my person when crossing a river, but the addition to his own weight of a good eleven stone affects even his horny sole when walking on the pebbly or rocky bottom, and causes the operation to be an unpopular one with him.

I have by this time learnt a few expressions by which I am able to direct the boys, but as I walk at the head of the procession, gun in hand, I find it difficult to prevent them from lagging, particularly the first day.

We commence to descend immediately we start, and it becomes abundantly evident that we are leaving the high plateau or ridge which runs north-east roughly from Bulawayo to Manicaland, forming a great "divide" or watershed.

The actual shoulders of the Selukwe Hills left behind, a network of spurs has to be threaded through, the Umtebekwe river winding between them. A large Kaffir kraal with extensive "lands" marks the place where I had been advised to pass the first night, but it is yet light and I determine to push on. A vast amount of work has been done in surrounding these "lands" or gardens with a hedge made of broken down tree branches, placed there to deter buck and oxen from visiting the patches of mealies, though it is noticeable in many places that these are entirely unprotected.

Having crossed the Umtebekwe, which proves to be fairly full for this time of year, we walk a hundred yards or so up the hill, and find on a cliff above the river a small hedge of thorn, semicircular in shape, with a tree forming a roof over it. This is our resting place for the first night, and as it is getting late and the sun has already set, I send my boys abroad to collect firewood for the night. This is quickly done, and my kettle is steaming. The baggage has been piled round me at one side of the "scherm," as the enclosure is called, and the Kaffirs crowd round the other side of the fire, which is made between the extremities of the hedge, and is kept in all night to scare away wild animals.

My meal is soon finished, and I watch the swarthy

Kaffirs preparing their meal at their own fire. They crouch round it, as close as the flames will permit them to, warming their hands and chattering incessantly, sometimes casting a sidelong glance at the "mulungu." An earthen pot is simmering on



BEDROOM ON THE UMTEBEKWE RIVER.

their fire, into which about three pounds of meal have been poured with a sufficiency of water to make the mass nicely viscid. One of the boys stirs this incessantly with a fresh cut stick until a satisfactory consistency has been attained, and finally they squat

round it, arranging with scrupulous care the monkey skin "mouches" which protect them from the spiky grass of the veldt. Each one pulls a piece of the elastic brown porridge from the pot (which stands fire admirably), and puts away a quantity which would satisfy a European during a whole day. Their capacity is marvellous to behold.

So far no game is to be expected, the blasting having frightened everything away from the district. At one time plenty was to be found, and a few months back a tiger raided a goat kraal and played havoc with its inmates. A pack of wild dogs, somewhat similar to the dingoes of Australia, was almost completely destroyed, too, by poison and shooting.

The floor of the scherm is dusty, and is also covered with leaves, in order to make it as soft for the sleeper as possible; I lay my macintosh down and creep into my sheepskin; the bright moonlight and brilliant stars serve to render the mountains mysterious, and the ripple of the river below lulls me to sleep, the Kaffirs stretching themselves, half covered, by the fire. A jackal makes its eerie bark as I am dropping off, and the novelty of the experience may be my excuse for making sure that my rifle lies at my hand and my revolver is free.

Before daylight the camp is astir, my "billy" on the fire, and the boys rolling up my rugs. I must

make an early start, for the boys have a hundred excuses for stopping, and I cannot wonder at it, the weights being heavy to carry over rough ground and in a broiling sun. Rising from my rugs I am annoyed to find that they are covered with a damp substance resembling clay, and, on examination, find that my macintosh is covered with white ants, who have been making a meal of it during the night and remain with their heads firmly fixed in the substance of it. I feel pleased that they confined their attentions to the macintosh and rugs, leaving me alone, but I have to spend some time in extracting them. They are stingless, with fat, dirty-white bodies and powerful mandibles, by means of which they will eat anything, from a house to one's boots! A nest of white ants is not the best place to sleep on, though there might be worse!

The boys gather a heap of caterpillars to-day, the trees swarming with them, and I see them prepared while seated near a large kraal during the mid-day rest. Taking half-a-dozen by their upper ends between his finger and thumb, the boy pinches the other extremity, and passing his fingers down the body deprives it of its contents, the remainder being thrown on to a platter formed by a section of bark cleverly chopped from a neighbouring tree.

There are acres of cultivated lands round the

kraal near which we stop at mid-day, and large numbers of women are seen gathering the corn and carrying it home to the store huts. They are too frightened to come near, but the men are punctilious in their salutation, "Morra, baas." Down in the



A KAFFIR MEAL OF CATERPILLARS.

hollow I hear a yell proceeding from infantile lungs, in a good old English fashion. Infants all over the world appear to have the same modes of expression!

I begin to see that I shall not be able to realise the expectation which had been held out to me, that

I should do the eighty miles in two and a half to three days, on which basis I had calculated my store of provisions, for the Kaffirs have to be continually whipped up, and once or twice I have to show I am master.

Passing through some bush I see some birds, rather larger than a woodpigeon, and the boys ask me to shoot one, which I do, after a little trouble, greatly to their delight. It appears to be a combination of a parrot and a pigeon, possessing brilliant yellow trousers, grass-green back, pigeon-coloured at the bend of the wings, and with black and white pinions. I feel too tired to skin it—for which I am sorry later—so Johnnie plucks and cleans it, showing it to be excellently plump, then throws it on to the embers to singe the small feathers off, shakes off the ashes, and splits it open (spreadeagled). I notice that he throws away the entrails, save the intestines, which he places on the hot ashes and eats afterwards.

He then turns to me and remarks, "Pelile, baas" (ready, sir), so I tell him that he and the others may have a portion of it, I roasting the other in a primitive way and finding it tasty. The boys' portion was well rubbed on both sides with salt (carried by one of them in a very dirty rag) prior to being laid on the hot embers, toasted, and eaten.

In the course of the proceedings a too confiding rat comes so close to me, and is so tame that I can stroke it, but I regret to relate that one of the boys gets within range and kills it, cleaning it and putting it on the embers. Whether it be so prepared for my benefit or not I am unable to say, but expectant glances are cast at me, while I wait with interest to see if they will eat it, which they do not. This is rather surprising, as it is a practice of the Kaffirs to set the veldt ablaze in order to obtain the mice and small animals which are killed in the process. The practice is a very troublesome one to those who graze many cattle on their farms, as it often deprives them prematurely of feed for their stock. It is probable that many would prefer a good healthy rat to a mess of caterpillars !

How difficult it is to give a true representation of the scene at night in our scherm ; so much depends on the complete realisation of how absolutely one is isolated from civilisation, and of the fact that one is thrown entirely into the companionship of a few savages ; this is only truly possible to those who have had such an experience. The absence of a white companion is often a source of regret, but it carries its own consolation in that it makes the experience a more thorough and novel one.

The Kaffirs within our leafy hedge at night are

sitting, squatting, or lounging before the fire, variously engaged ; one is pounding native tobacco (Gwai) to make snuff. This is "Dead-eye," as he had been named before starting—"Dydaio," as he expanded it into—he having been so unfortunate as to have had one eye gouged out when fighting, according to the amiable custom of the Makalanga. He is a villainously ugly wretch. A favourite snuff-box is an old Martini-Henry cartridge case, holding "Gwai" instead of powder, naturally, which were the more powerful it being difficult to determine. The snuff is made by pounding the tobacco on a warm stone as fine as possible, in conjunction with the burnt ash of the inner bark of a particular tree. It becomes reduced to a very fine powder, and a great deal of trouble appears to be expended on its preparation.

It is impossible to help laughing at the inquiring way in which these Kaffirs look at me sometimes, if they think I am not looking. They appear to regard me as a sort of curiosity, whose actions are incomprehensible and generally most reasonless and absurd. They wonder what extraordinary thing I shall do next. A wholesome fear of the revolver is apparently held, they telling me, with a shake of the head, that it is "Imushli" (not nice).

They are resting now ; how they smack their lips

over the last of the caterpillars! I feel quite safe with these boys, for the Matabele war has made them think much of the "mulungu," and with somewhat of awe; not only this, but Johnnie is particularly anxious that I shall come to no harm—probably because he feels that he will be held accountable if I do not reach Victoria in safety, and might lose the chance of engagement at the mines on his return. When I pluck a Kaffir orange out of curiosity, it being unripe, Johnnie insists, time after time, that it is "Imushli, baas, I-co-na mushli"—"Icona" being the expanded negative used for the purpose of emphasis—and once, when I stumble, his expressions of anxiety are almost ludicrous. He always walks close behind me, while the others straggle half a mile behind sometimes, and takes care of me in particular. He is a fine specimen of the Kaffir animal, and carries his load better than any.

The third day out sees another short day's journey, for, though the boys are getting more into condition, they still lag badly, and I have to shout at them once or twice to make them realise that they cannot for ever be stopping to snuff or to rest. I could do twice the distance in a day were the boys all Shangaans.

In the morning we pass Umtanga's mountain, which has been looming ahead of us for so long, and

before night it is blue in the distance behind, though we seem hours in passing it. The Selukwe mountains, elevated as they are, can still be traced far away, and the hills which mark the site of Victoria are about equally distinct in front of us, so about half the distance has now been covered.

Numbers of boys pass us on their way to the mines, and all are ready with their salutation as we near them. I buy an assegai from one, it costing me a shilling, and find it to be covered with blood-stains. No gory story need be evolved from this, however, as it is probably the life-blood of a goat or sheep slaughtered for a feast.

I desire to send a letter to one of my friends at Selukwe, so I take advantage of the travelling post-office—that is, I stop one of a party of boys and give him a “briefie,” as it is called in Kaffir pigeon English (and in Flemish !), and tell him to take it to the “mukuru inkosi” (tall chief). The boy will have to search a district of ten or twelve miles in extent before he finds the addressee, unless he stumble by chance on the right person. Yet I have full faith that, though no payment is made or asked for, it will be delivered safely and in good time (a faith which is justified by events). The boy is most respectful, and wraps it up carefully in the

tail of a very old shirt he carries on his back, the arms tied around his neck

Two miles before reaching the great Tokwe river we rest under a baobab tree at the foot of a kopje, on which is a Mashona village; this is composed of queer little mud huts with ragged roofs of grass, and are stuck oddly on the top of the enormous boulders which are thrown higgledy-piggeldy about the crown of the densely tree-covered kopje.

The characteristic of the Mashona village, or "stadt" as it is styled when in such a situation, as distinguished from that of the Matabele, is the small size of its huts and their extreme dirtiness; they also are made somewhat in the style of the huts used by Europeans, but are lower as a rule, and the grass thatching is done more untidily, the eaves being very low, and presenting a ragged, untrimmed appearance.

The vegetation on this kopje is exuberant, and I photograph it, especially on account of the baobab trees and the candelabra tree, a euphorbia, so called on account of its likeness to the many branched candelabra of the Scriptures. The kopje is an excellent example, too, of the sudden way in which these hills rise out of the comparatively flat plain.

The Tokwe has a frightfully rough bed, and even now has a fair amount of water in it, but I manage

to get over dry-shod by stepping from boulder to boulder. Then comes the treat of the day, for off go my boots and socks, and I lave my tired and aching feet in the limpid water, keeping a sharp eye open for crocodiles ; I deny myself a swim, having been told, though whether correctly or not I am not quite sure, that there is a likelihood of getting fever through bathing in cold water, especially in the heat. Certain it is that those who have suffered from fever appear very often to have a recurrence after washing in cold water, and many make a practice of using hot water only, when possible.

“ No water ahead,” is the cry of my Kaffirs, and this is somewhat borne out by a small party of boys who anxiously inquire if *we* have recently seen water so, as but about an hour of daylight only is left, we make our camp on the sloping sides of a huge ant-hill, protected by its mass and the clump of trees growing on it from the bitter south-east wind which blows so regularly during this season. This wind is too cool to be pleasant, even when the sun is at its fiercest, for it is so keen that one is obliged to protect oneself from it in a way which would be unnecessary in its absence, and is productive of heat and discomfort.

Wood is scarce here, and the boys are a long time in bringing sufficient for the night's consumption,

this bearing particularly on an event which occurred during the night.

There are many signs that game is plentiful in the country now being passed through, the spoor of large buck and fresh droppings showing that no great time has elapsed since they have crossed my path.

I sleep well on the ground before the fire, having rigged an additional rug, tent-wise, over my head and shoulders, the lower end falling over my body. A heavy dew falling therefore makes no impression on me. I feel, soundly as I sleep, that I do so with one eye open, for if one of the Kaffirs stir to make up the fire, I always wake and look out, to find the stars laughing down at me.

How it is that Kaffirs do not die of cold at night is difficult to understand; one or two have a small sack each, into which they creep head first, leaving their legs entirely exposed to the dew and wind, while others have practically nothing but their monkey-skin "mouches."

I am rendered wide awake this night by the weird yell of a hyaena, uttered within a few yards of me. It is a sound expressive of demoniacal disappointment and rage, and when I hear later that a traveller had a portion of his hand taken off while asleep at night, I feel pleased that I had half wakened to find

the fire burnt very low through lack of fuel, and had stirred Johnnie up to replenish it, his movements having startled the hyaena (or wolf, as it is called here). The beast seems to have been creeping right up to our sleeping place with a view to snatching a meal, for I clearly see his spoor next morning in the dusty earth within ten paces of where I had been lying. It is characteristic of this scavenger that he will not attack a human being unless he be sound asleep and other conditions be favourable, and as a rule he will hang around a wagon, if there be a sick bullock, and wait until it is lying helpless on the ground, when he will run in and take a sharp, clean bite out of it. He will seldom attack a healthy animal, unless it be bogged. This sound, so unexpected as it was, had a most eerie effect, and I confess to not sleeping for some time after the yells had become less frequent and faint in the distance.

The next day Dydaio is very sluggish in getting his load ready, and, when I speak to him, just looks at me to see how I take it, and hardly stirs. I know that if I do not show him that I am master I may have very great trouble with all, and may have great difficulty in getting to Victoria with my belongings. The Kaffir has to be treated as one would treat a fractious horse, kindness, firmness,

and decision being essential to get good work out of him. Once let him think that he is master, and he will prove a tyrant and a danger, so I take my gun in my hands, half raising it with a smile, and shout "Chercha, hamba" (Make haste, start), and with a deprecating smile, Dydaio meekly says, "Lungili, baas" (All right, sir), and passes on without more ado. But I notice that I do not need to hurry them forward in the way I have had to before.

Four miles from our sleeping place I am surprised to see a herd of cattle, and immediately conclude that, contrary to every expectation, there must be white men near, though I had been assured that there were none between Selukwe and Victoria. But it proves to be the case, for I see their huts across the valley, and make my way to them. A few fat Kaffirs lounge about outside, rather to my surprise, and on approaching the door of the main hut, I see two men, both down with severe fever, one lying speechless on the floor, resembling a corpse. Two Africander farmers from the Colony, they had settled in this distant spot, on the borders of Matabeleland, and while they had had fair success, the curse of the country had temporarily laid them low. Judging from the many trophies, game is abundant, and a piece of venison is a welcome addition to my larder. I can do nothing for

these poor fellows, as they are well stocked with drugs, and one can move about sufficiently well to attend somewhat to the other. Promising to report them in camp, I wend my way onwards, having declined a glass of the milk, which was obviously scanty in quantity and necessary for the sufferers. The Matabele cows give very little milk, and that is often difficult to get, as they refuse to milk without the calf, and will go quite dry immediately it is taken away. A trick is sometimes played on them by means of a stuffed calf being brought into requisition, but the sham does not serve for long. This characteristic is observable in China as well, but the Chinese cow is more acute, the stuffed calf trick being there of no avail.

Crossing the Umgesi River, a fairly long stretch of country brings me to the Shashi, which, even here, is a fine body of water, with a reputation for crocodiles, which I am unable to corroborate, inasmuch as I see none; I do not waste time, though, when wading over, the water being about three feet deep in one place.

This fertile and well-watered country abounds with game, as I could see in many ways, and the fever-stricken farmers tell me that both sable and roan antelope, koodoo and tsessebe are to be found with but little trouble. I also hear from them that

lions have been heard recently, and trust to luck that none will trouble me during the next night or two when I shall still be sleeping unprotected on the veldt. It is rather a strange feeling at first when one realises that there actually is an off chance of waking up to find one's camp menaced.

That night I write my diary by the camp fire, the solitary candle I have brought with me having burnt out; I am forced to be contented with the uncertain and flickering light of the fire and the beautiful starlight. The "Great Bear" is upside down on the horizon, bringing me back to the old days at a Hampshire school, where the great constellation formed such a feature at night across the wide playground. Little did I then think that one day I should be watching it sprawling on its back in a manner most undignified for a respectable constellation, that I should have for my bed the hard ground, and for companions a few savages only recently delivered from a reign of barbarian terror, while around my camp wild hyænas and jackals occasionally betray their presence by a short yap or a weird yell.

Before crossing the Shashi River, we notice a large party of boys on their way to the mines, resting beneath a clump of trees a little way from the road. We, having crossed and made our

preparations for the mid-day meal, after an unusually hot morning, two great swells cross over to us with pompous mien and evident intention of interviewing me. They hand me papers, from which I gather that they are native policemen engaged in escorting the party of boys to a particular mine in the Selukwe district. They orate at great length to me, apparently asking questions, which my excessively limited knowledge of the language and its variations quite prevents me from grasping, though I have some idea that they are asking for sugar. Having no sugar, I give them each a dose of saccharine, which produces facial contortions, but to which they certainly do not object, as a European would have done. Somewhat pleased, yet unconvinced that I could not give them what they wanted (for they endeavour to speak through the medium of my own Kaffirs), they march solemnly back to their charges.

The odour of the Kaffir is quite unmistakable, and clings; it renders the atmosphere particularly objectionable in the drives of a mine. Amongst this party are examples of various methods of dressing the hair in wonderful and ornamental designs. One shaves longitudinal sections an inch wide, gently curving round his head, being particular to leave a strip of hair running over his head from the centre of his forehead to the nape of his neck.

On this bar the hair is divided into some eighteen or twenty sections, the individual hairs of which are bound tightly together into a little column about an inch long, the ends bunching out at the top. Another, which is certainly not so charming a device, is one in which the bars go from ear to ear over the head.

Perhaps the most troublesome to prepare is that of the man whose head is *covered* with innumerable numbers of the tiny bunches which his companion only indulges in one line of ; and the ugliest fashion of the lot is a vast number of tiny (though longer) plaits, thoroughly greased, and hanging well over the face from a central spot on the top. Many of those who possess beards (usually short and rather scanty) carry them in plaits, a piece of grass very often being woven with the hair to be used finally for tying the ends to prevent unravelling. My own beard by this time has become fully half an inch long through no hot water having been brought to my door during the last few days, and Johnnie becomes lost in admiration of it, for he points to it and remarks, "Mushli, baas." It is recorded that after one of the battles during the war one of the wounded Matabele, carried in to die of his wounds in the British laager, looked up and laughed as he exclaimed, viewing the beardless faces of many of

his conquerors, "Why, the great Imbezu regiment has been thrashed by a lot of *boys*."

I start from my resting place in the Isifule hills with the intention of doing a big walk, but it dwindles down as the day advances, the country traversed becoming excessively hilly and rough, and it is occasionally difficult to see the track; for though at one time in the early days a man had made a wagon track over the country, this has long been disused, and for a great distance is obliterated, so that we have to trust to a compass and instinct.

My food has now practically come to an end, and I begin to amuse myself as to what I shall have to put up with when I am face to face with the necessity of drawing upon the larders of the kraals.

The grass in places is very long, waving far over my head as I push my way through it; in so doing it is not wonderful that I become a very porcupine in appearance and in temper, for the spear-pointed seeds stick by thousands in my clothing, and work themselves in and out until it becomes almost a matter of impossibility to extract them. In the meantime they irritate and scratch one beyond measure, for while the shaft remains firmly interwoven with the texture of the material, the sharp point is free to exercise its peculiar ingenuity on the skin; the vast number of the implements of torture is the mentally

exasperating factor, for no sooner have I, as I fondly believe, cleared myself of them after a considerable exercise of patience, than one after another make themselves evident in the most inaccessible places, having previously lain quiescent. I begin to realise how both here and in New Zealand a common cause of death amongst sheep is a grass seed which corkscrews its way through the wool, and, penetrating the body, causes ulcers and death.

Having got rid of the Isifule hills (we could dimly see these from the heights of Selukwe, and took them for the Victoria mountains), we get into a much broken country, quite a maze of wonderfully ragged cliffs and kopjes, very picturesque. Then comes a terribly weary grind up rising ground for fully three miles, the breeze being kept from us by the surrounding hills. I feel inclined to bless every cloud that comes across the face of the sun—a very unusual thing for me to do.

For a long way it is useless for us to stop for lunch, there being a great scarcity of water, and when at last we do get it, it looks as if it has been brought in a filthy milk pail, so thick and muddy is it. Boiling well and the addition of tea make it comparatively palatable, but I wonder how people in England would look if they were asked to drink it!

I had provisioned my boys for four days, and at

lunch Dydaio informs me that there is "Icona scoff" (no food), so I say to him for fun, "Lungili, scoff Victoria" (all right, food at Victoria), but they do not relish this at all, saying, with a laugh at what they know to be my joke, "I-cona, baas! 'Petoria' cachana." (No indeed, sir, Victoria is too far.) In answer to my question, "Upi tenga scoff?" (where buy food), they point across the bush, where their sharp eyes have discovered the signs of Kaffir cultivation, and I soon see acres and acres and acres of ground tilled by the Kaffirs of a neighbouring kraal.* The ladies in the corn rise to peep at us as we pass, with undisguised curiosity, and small wonder, for I wear a pair of blue goggles, an unsightly five days' beard, a handkerchief flying under my hat, and a gun on my shoulder. Passing through so many Kaffir lands it strikes me that I may be able to get some eggs, and would take one beaten up with a little brandy, so I draw a picture of an egg and detail two of the boys to go and get some; but they entirely fail to grasp my meaning or the purport of the sketch, so I have perforce to imitate the cluck of a hen, on which they suggest "inkuku" (fowl), whereupon I pretended to be searching for an egg,

* The resemblance between the Kaffir "Upi" and the Latin "Ubi" is close and interesting, both meaning "where."

all to no purpose. I then take once more to my sketch-book, cracking the egg and sketching a chicken in the act of breaking out of the shell. They then burst into a roar of laughter and completely understand, shouting "Ja, baas, *mazai*" (egg). I continue to be in a state of uncertainty whether they may not take me too literally and bring me "setty" eggs, with the "piccanin inkuku" inside!

Johnnie returns in half an hour with the news that he can get no "mazai," they being "pelile" (finished), so he brings a whole heap of sweet potatoes (the "kumuru" of the South Sea Islands) and monkey nuts, the latter being sometimes known as ground, or pea-nuts. There is actually some sense of duty and politeness in the Shangaan soul, for he puts them all down at my feet, picks out the nicest and fattest (it is extraordinary what elongated, straggling things sweet potatoes are) and puts them in my hands; then, seeing that I do not know the best way of cooking them, takes my tin "billy" of his own accord, lights another fire, and squats down to boil them for me. Some prefer them roasted in the hot ashes.

One of the boys—a Makalanga—cut his foot very badly during the day while walking, and came to me with a most pathetic grimace (no expression

on his ugly face could be other than a grimace), asking me to do something for it, for many Kaffirs seem to have considerable faith in the doctoring powers of the "Mulungu." I put some healing ointment on it (with *his* finger), having made him wash it well first, and bandaged it with a strip of lint, sewing it on so successfully that it kept in place for the rest of the tramp.

We have a glorious sunset this evening, and it demonstrates the benefit of living an absolutely outdoor life—in South Africa and in its winter—for one misses none of Nature's sights. Over the mountains of Victoria (I fondly believe that they are at length before my eyes) the clouds are, for a brief space, blood red, changing to darkness. I cannot help dreaming, that to me, the white man of the party, it is telling the story of the first spilling of blood during the late war, which occurred close to my halting place, and which resulted finally in the death of Wilson, Borrow, and many others—and that it is warning my friends the black men of the destruction which came to so many of their hostile brethren and their unhappy, unfortunate king, Lobengula.

As usual, on waking at daybreak, at the foot of the great anthill (it is so deliciously easy to "get up" early when sleeping on the veldt!), I find the

boys sitting clustered round the fire, warming themselves and gossiping. It is a curious fact that it is impossible to get work out of Kaffirs when it is cold, as it is before daybreak ; they appear to have no idea that they can warm themselves by working hard, but sit round the fire, shivering on one side and roasting on the other. I again have to content myself with a dish of sweet potatoes and monkey nuts, washed down with that ever-to-be-grateful-for beverage of the East, and find that half a sweet potato, boiled, is sufficient for a meal, while half a dozen ought to last one a week.

I yell at the boys to "boss up," and the procession starts for the last time, as it turns out ; for I have awakened to a surprise this morning, a few miles only being walked before the town of Victoria becomes visible in the clear distance.

We near, on our left, some of those great rounded and smooth granite kopjes, which are peculiar to this country, and look as though a great bubble had formed in the molten rock as it cooled, then had forced its top portion far above the surface and solidified. They have a ringing, hollow sound as they are passed over, but it is improbable that they are other than solid, the manner in which the surface flakes off in skins probably accounting for the hollow sound, and forming an easy means of

making the stone bricks which were made such use of by the ancients in forming their great structures.

At a point approaching the road, within a few hundred yards, for this kopje is a very long one, are to be seen a large number of the Makalanga huts, characteristic in their small diameter and low, shaggy eaves. Close to the top, high on the kopje, are a considerable number more, dotted anyhow here and there in a clump, without any attempt at regularity or arrangement. This is the big kraal, where the Matabele, at the end of 1893, began the now famous slaughter, which ended in the first fighting of the late war, later known as "The Victoria Incident."

An "impi" of Matabele, many hundred strong, had come along the route I have taken, or approximately so, and fell upon these poor creatures, killing large numbers of men and old women, and taking the young women and children. They spread over the whole district for miles, according to my informants, who were present at the time, hunted the old chief right up to the church in the very town of Victoria, slaying the fugitives as they came along. They visited some of the mines, and slaughtered prospectors' boys, in some instances killing them before their masters' faces, and finally returned to Victoria to demand the fugitives who had fled to the

white man for protection. The story is old. A great "indaba" was held, at which their behaviour was insulting in the extreme, and finally they were informed that if they did not clear from the district by the time the sun had travelled a certain distance—about two hours—they would be *driven* away. They calmly slouched off, and were actually proceeding to devastate another kraal, when they were overtaken and forced to flee, leaving a number, including the most impudent induna of all, dead on the veldt.

The Makalaka and Makalanga natives were convinced that the white man would be "wiped out," but rejoiced at their mistake.

Not two miles further have I walked, with the blue range still distant in front, believing yet that I should find the town close to it, and that my walk would take me some hours yet, when, lo and behold! I see the town on a rise three miles away, and rejoice.

Unwittingly I had slept not more than six miles outside the town, my boys having evidently reckoned that they had done enough walking the day before, though had I been aware of my proximity I should have been able to get in only an hour after sunset. The moral is that a better knowledge of the language should have been attained!

Many women and children are to be seen here, on

their way to their work from the fields, some with baskets on their heads, others bent on weeding or ploughing for their next year's crop ; quite close to the town I notice some women carrying bottles balanced on their nearly clean shaven heads without the slightest shake or fear of a capsize or slip. They often stop at a respectful distance to look at our little caravan, or shyly turn their heads to regard us, as if half afraid. They are heathenishly ugly after they have passed their first youth.

I am greeted when passing the fort by someone hailing, "So you've come back at last." I reply, "Yes, I have ; but do not remember when I was here before !" The resident of Victoria now finds his mistake out, but I get my directions to the hostelry which I have been vainly looking for, and at which I at last find a very welcome resting place.



CHAPTER V.

SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI.

WHAT an instantaneous change from the solitude of the veldt to the vivacity of a town, numbering fifty souls, over which the tide of prosperity has advanced only to recede again, temporary though the retrocession probably is !

Victoria at this time is very dull, it being practically empty, as compared with the lively times before the war broke out, when so many deserted it for the rising star of Bulawayo. This was very hard on Victoria, as it was just going ahead when the war occurred. Neither bootmaker nor tailor is there in the town, badly as I need their services ; all have taken wings unto themselves and flown to the late home of Lobengula.

The Government buildings are of brick, intensely plain in design, but the large square inclosure is walled and loop-holed effectually for defensive purposes. At either of two opposite corners is a plain square tower, on which were mounted Maxim and other quick-firing guns during the war.

The town has the distinction of lying between two rivers, in one of which a crocodile has recently been killed, for these reptiles abound in the Umchegi and the Umshagashi; therefore plenty of water is ordinarily available for the present limited population.

For the rest there are a forlorn-looking church, a couple of hotels, a few stores and houses, and one substantial and nicely-built residence. The hospital, too, claims attention, for it is a very respectable and well-arranged building, and was built entirely with funds collected in Mashonaland, without any outside help, I am informed.

The coolie cook at the hotel is a character, for he formed one of the contingent at the battle of Bembisi, confessing without shame afterwards that he spent the whole of the time hidden in the hole of an antbear.

It is arranged with great kindness that I shall be conducted to Zimbabwe, making a four days' trip round the country afterwards, and so, sending some boys on with our rugs and bag containing provisions, we leave Victoria at an early hour. The horse I ride, kindly lent me by the police, and being the only one available, is the vilest animal I ever bestrode, and his trot can be trusted to half disjoint the bones of the strongest; the pain of his canter, taken as an

alternative, is only to be alleviated in any degree by a practical disuse of the stirrups and a sole use of the knees, care being taken to rest as little on the saddle as possible. He continually stumbles, the smoother the road the more he does so, and before eighteen miles have been ridden he is practically dead beat. This is a *salted* horse, but not precisely a favourable specimen.

In a bee line, Zimbabwe is about fifteen miles from Victoria, but such a *détour* has to be made that the path is fully twenty miles long.

We take five hours over the journey, for I have to walk my poor beast most of the way, and so arrive only a short time before sundown. The course had lain firstly over the great plain, which is the beginning of the high veldt, delighting the eyes of the pioneers as they ended their anxious tramp up Providential Pass. On the right lies a huge kopje, miles away, with the same sudden upheaval and very steep—this is Mount Victoria, which we see later on.

The scenery is really beautiful and the day lovely as we canter along the unlimited expanse, experiencing the delicious sensation of absolute freedom to go everywhere and any distance, without restraint or inclosure, such as one is bound to feel in our tiny and much-divided England.

At one spot we see a couple of shafts and a number of deserted caved-in huts, the property of a great mining company, who are letting the reef lie for the present in order to develop their Matabeleland properties.

Close to the Poort, or pass, the level of which is the same as that of the plain, though the line of kopjes rises abruptly on either side, we ride up to the ruins of a late hostelry, most picturesquely situated; the long verandah is one mass of grenadillas, or passion fruit, which in their luxuriance even invade the falling-in roof. They are covered with fruit, which is unripe, but as it is already the season for them, it is probable that the Kaffirs have been there before us, and have stripped the plants of the ripe ones.

Not far away we pass an ancient, broken-down Kaffir, who can hardly even articulate, but who carries a bow and arrow which no offer of money (mali) can purchase from him. He says that he would be defenceless without it, and we tell him that he need not fear the Matabele now, but it is to be supposed that he has lived all his life in terror of these scourges, and cannot accustom himself to the idea of being without the means of self defence.

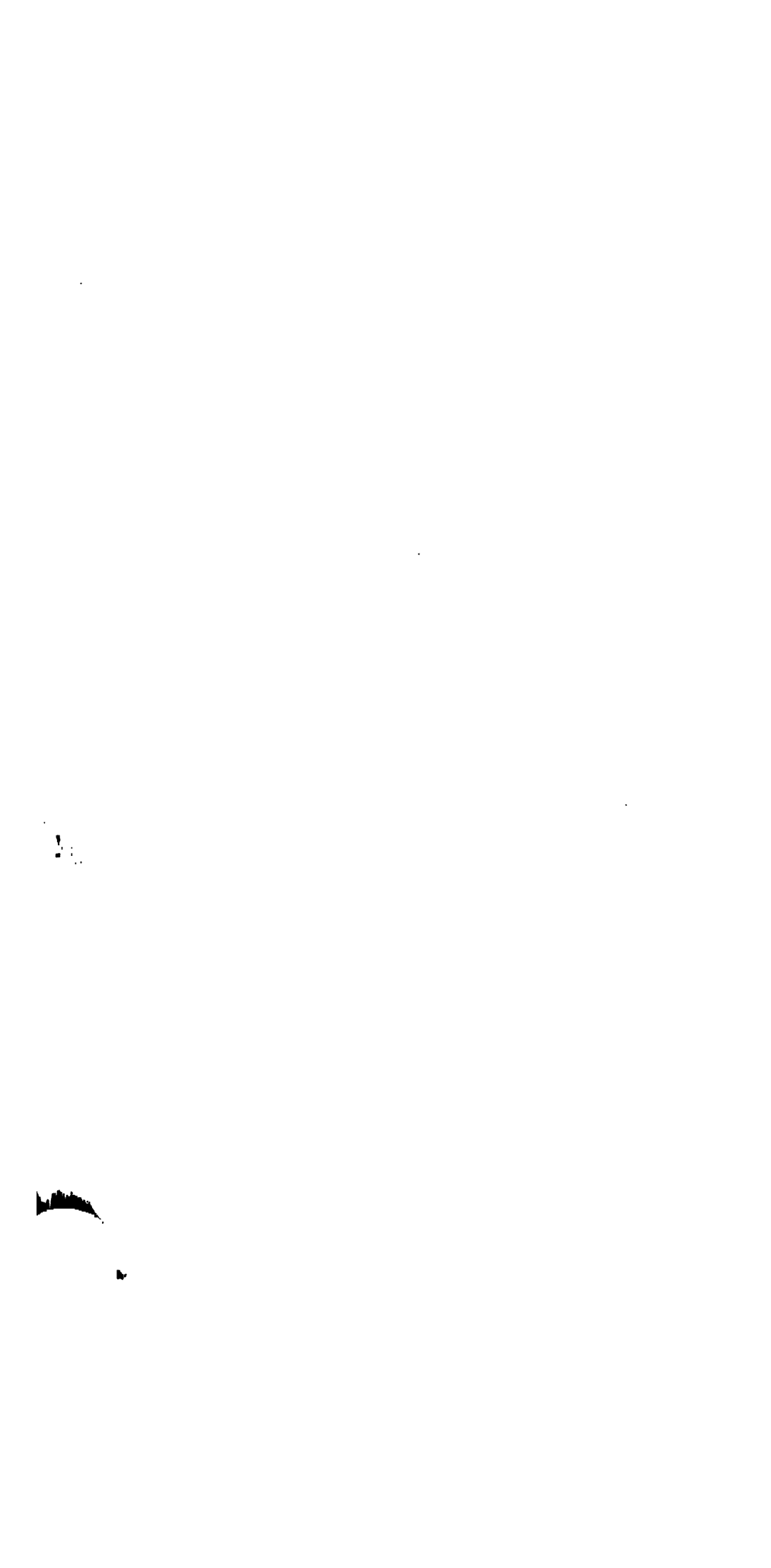
We then get well into the thick bush and amongst the mountains; the scenery being most charming,

and the colouring of the landscape lovely. As we cross a stretch of veldt we ride into a swarm of locusts, and these, rising from the grass as we approach, fill the air, often dashing with their prickly legs into our faces. It proves to be most disagreeable, and the horses dislike it as much as we. Then the air above and in front becomes thick with a great cloud of them, and we have to bend our heads to the storm in riding through to save our faces and eyes. It seems like a snowstorm with huge flakes of snow.

The ant hills are numerous in certain places here, and attain a great size, some being certainly over thirty feet high, and, so far as I can roughly judge, full a hundred feet in circumference. On one I count twenty trees of various sizes growing, the majority being thirty or forty feet in height, so it will be seen what large mounds they are.

Zimbabwe Kopje now looms high in the distance, and forms an outpost of the rough range of hills behind it, rugged and conspicuous. It seems ages before we get there, for our horses seem done up, and a forcible hunger causes us to anticipate our arrival with eagerness, for our boys should be there by this time, a footpath over the hills permitting a short cut to be made by foot passengers.

We ride straight for the Temple, four or five







away from the ruins, where the curator has been living, and surprise him in the act of putting his few remaining possessions together, for he is at the point of leaving his charge for good, and has stripped his huts of almost everything.

The more serious fact becomes patent, however, that our boys have not turned up, and we are therefore bereft of our provisions. We have not eaten since early morn, and are torn with anguish on finding that our friend has but a small piece of pork and a slice or so of bread, which would constitute his breakfast in due time. With the utmost kindness he places this at our disposal, and proffers us a brimming cup of Kaffir beer, no tea or coffee being within twenty miles of us. I look very dubiously at this beverage, for it smells precisely like sour pig-wash, and, on overcoming my hardly astonishing scruples, I find that its taste corresponds with its smell; neither is its appearance inviting, for it is thickish and of a gruelly colour. To a thirsty soul even it is—well, better than nothing whatever, and that is about all; but I am informed that it is very palatable if made properly.

My bed is made by the deposit of rugs on the dirty floor of a doorless hut, and the stars are visible through the thatching of the roof, while the mud walls also admit light and air in places, so I am

awake at daybreak, and am disgusted to find the sky full of lowering clouds; these, rolling purple and angry among the brighter purple mountains, with grey masses of granite standing out in bold relief, make a grand sight, and one which I would willingly have pictured.

One tiny sandwich each constitutes our breakfast, for though our boys have arrived they have carelessly lost one of the little packages, and we afterwards bargain with an eminent and ugly Kaffir, nicknamed Adonis, to show us the way up to the hill fort. Though the kopje which it crowns stands right before our eyes, the precaution of taking a guide at this time of year is most necessary, for the long grass hides the paths entirely; the length of the grass is a wonder to English eyes, for in places I have been on horseback through grass which still met far over my head.

Up we climb, and after a stiff pull, our guide (who has left us far behind, having neither too much flesh nor a superabundance of clothing to hinder him) stops and points out with a most serious air—indeed, anxiously—some of the first lines of fortifications; this is a wall filling up a space between two great boulders, which already form a natural rampart.

The view is most extensive; on the side further from the Temple, that is, looking north, we look

over a lovely African valley, bounded in the blue distance by the towering mountains, through which we had threaded our way when coming. Practically the whole of this valley has been divided into farm lands, acquired mainly by "pioneer rights," that is, by the members of the pioneer expedition receiving preferential permits to peg out farm lands.

As we ascend, our path winds round the shoulders of the kopje, and we see many further evidences of the ancient engineers ; in one place, where a cutting had been made, I notice the bones of oxen buried about six inches below the surface, but it is most probable that these are simply the remains of Makalanga feasts. We branch off to the right as we near a Makalanga kraal, which appears to be in great part dilapidated, and pass through a small plantation of tobacco.

The boulders here are simply enormous ; prior to this I have only seen them from a certain distance, but on close approach they are seen to be really huge, their smooth, even shape, and fantastic positions suggesting the agency of water.

Our good guide, with his infantile method of talking, shows himself as accomplished a specimen of the genus as any of those who take one in hand in the galleries or museums of Europe, with the important exception that he keeps silence when required.

The nettles are huge and fierce, much more formidable than their English cousins; they do not bark—they bite. Adonis carefully explains this to each in turn and in infinite detail, saying, in anxious tones, as he points apprehensively at the particular clump of nettles we may be approaching: "Lo, skellum, lo—maningi skellum; icona mushli, baas; icona hamba lapa!" which we take as meaning, "That is a bad thing—a very bad thing; very nasty, sir; do not go there!" Certainly he has more reason to fear its stings than we have, for he is dressed in African fashion. Evidently once bitten is twice shy in the case of Adonis.

Drawing near to examine them he is at great pains to dissuade one from approaching them, even within a yard. Each time they appear within ten feet of our path he raises an anxiously warning voice, for they pierce even my thick corduroy breeches, and each time we come to a spot of interest he carefully points it out with exuberance of modulated and doubtless expressive syllables.

We follow our guide through a small opening between two of the giant boulders, which has evidently once been guarded by walls (these boulders are often between forty and fifty feet in height), and thereby pass to the opposite side of the kopje, facing the Temple. Here the carefully-built walls

are most extensive, and we are still hemmed in by boulders; we pass over a narrow bridge, an entrance from the exterior passing beneath us, and Adonis at this point expresses the utmost concern that we should not step on a certain loose stone. Then we pass down an artificial slope through an entrance in a party wall into a large, deep cavity, bounded on the outside of the kopje by a great prostrate boulder some fifty feet long by thirty high. This would effectually conceal an army from the view of persons below, while at the back and sides it is absolutely sheltered by multitudinous walls and the crowning boulders of the kopje summit towering above.

The vegetation in these sheltered spots is luxuriant, and often of a kind not to be seen down below. There are large numbers of the castor-oil plant, and of the red flowering *Cannabis indica*, or Indian hemp, the latter growing in profusion. The presence of this plant, said to be originally a native of Persia, on the top of the kopje, gives rise to considerable speculation on my part, for I have, in spite of considerable inquiry, been able to discover no news as to its presence on other kopjes in the country. This might be taken as corroborating the theory that the original immigrants came from the north, possibly from that portion of the Persian Gulf

which was the home of the Phœnician race. Certainly the *Cannabis indica* is common enough on the coast of Africa at this latitude, and is much used for smoking by the natives, but it is probably not indigenous, and may have been brought (for the sake of its narcotic properties) from the country not far removed from the north-east of India, which is believed to be the original home of the widespread Phallic form of worship, of which there are abundant traces in the temple, and in the soapstone images which have been discovered here. Whatever may be the fact in this theory, it appears probable that it at least connects the buildings with a race which had communication with the sea, particularly when the ruins along the course of the Sabi river are considered.

Old Adonis is asked what he knows about the ruins, and in answer to the question says, in his gentle, softly-harsh voice, that the ruins were built long ago by strangers who came from the sea, and who resided here for a long time, building these great temples and forts, and finally, without any apparent cause, suddenly disappearing from the country, never to be seen again; he added that they were certainly not white men. This is probably mere gossip, picked up from visitors in his capacity as guide; for, as is common knowledge, among the

Kaffirs history older than two or three generations is hardly known.

A climb brings us round to the main entrance of



AN ENTRANCE TO THE KOPJE FORT, ZIMBABWE.

the fort. The hillside, on to which this entrance opens, is excessively steep, and I can trace the path down the steps to the rocky cleft at the foot of the

hill which forms the first approach to the fort on the temple side. The entrance itself is a marvel. Of the same character as the main entrance to the temple, it is simply a narrow passage, say forty feet long, between two walls fully thirty feet high, all built in a most beautiful manner of unmortared stone bricks. The passage is expanded on one side slightly, say four feet from the entrance, to enable three men to command it, while only one incomer can pass at a time.

Passing onwards and upwards—the walls are very thick here—we turn to the left into what is apparently an inclosure commanding the path up the kopje side and the entrance itself; it is peculiar in having certain vertical grooves in the wall for which it is difficult to give an explanation. Hence one gets a grand view of the temple at our feet, its inclosure filled with great trees, some of which are said to be unknown to the neighbourhood.

Between us and the temple is to be seen, small in the distance below us, the grave which shelters the remains of poor Allan Wilson, Borrow, and the others of their ill-fated and gallant party.

Led onward by our careful, though now somewhat impatient guide, we enter still another inclosure of the same extraordinary character as that which we have just left, but in this case the boulders are of a



ZIMBABWE - TEMPLE AS SEEN FROM THE KOPJE FORT.



1. 2. 3.



ZIMBABWE ; TEMPLE AS SEEN FROM THE KOPJE FORT.

yet more strange and fantastic description, and their ill-fits are made up for by human ingenuity. It is here, I believe, that a (so-called) altar was found, though I now can see no remnant of it. It is overlooked by a ledge, reached by a round-about way through an inclosure which we explore next, and is crowded with luxuriant foliage, amongst which the handsome leaves of the castor-oil plant predominate.

Scrambling out of this roofless dungeon through a mere rabbit hole, under tons of tumbled boulders, we commence our descent, for, unhappily, time cannot be spared to investigate more thoroughly. As we near the Makalanga kraal we see a man and woman outside one of the huts scanning us narrowly, but disappearing as we cross the tobacco patch, so we approach the hut by the way of their dilapidated store huts. We find that they have bolted into their residence, and would have double locked the door had they been possessed of the means of doing so; but a basket hurdle is all they can boast of, and as we push it aside and crawl into the dark dwelling we see the figures of a young woman and a grey, wrinkled, and decrepit old man. This is an old Makalanga induna, Ikomo by name, who lives up here alone with his girl wife, and has often owed his life and safety to the superstitious fears which the

Matabele seem to have had for these strange ruins. Ikomo's people have lived on the kopje for many years, but have lately been obliged to leave to reside in the valley that no interference with the ruins may occur, this being no hardship now that the Matabele are unlikely to trouble them any further. Every drop of water has to be fetched up from below—no inconsiderable task—by the young "umfaas," for no spring has been discovered on the hill.

The old man is sprawling at length before us, while the "umfaas" sits on a large flat stone. In the centre of the hut are the remaining embers of the fire which has cooked their morning porridge, and some of the entrails of a goat hang suspended over it. The door is the only window and chimney, so it is not surprising that the saplings of the roof are black with smoke. When one's eyes become used to the darkness a rude couch can be seen at one side, and hanging down from the roof is a bow, supple and tight strung, and a strange quiver filled with rush arrows, the heads of which are beautifully fashioned out of native iron. The bow the old gentleman will on no account part with, it being, as he informs us, his only means of defence. On examination, the quiver is seen to be the skin of a small animal some two feet long, adorned with a long tail. The peculiarity of the quiver lies in the fact

that the animal has been skinned whole, from the mouth downwards, without a longitudinal cut, the mouth being used as the entrance for the arrows. This, after much bargaining and debate, I purchase, with a few arrows ; some of these are poisoned, and the old heathen, with his mild, persuasive, and insinuating voice, attempts to cheat me by putting broken-headed ones into the quiver instead of good ones.

These Makalangas are expert in working in iron, and manufacture assegais and arrow heads with great neatness, smelting the iron from the abundant ore of the district, and forging them with stone hammers. The fireclay pipes used in the course of the smelting operations and the goatskin bellows are visible behind the roof poles. The hut seems fairly clean, but the roof is black as ink through the smoke from the fire.

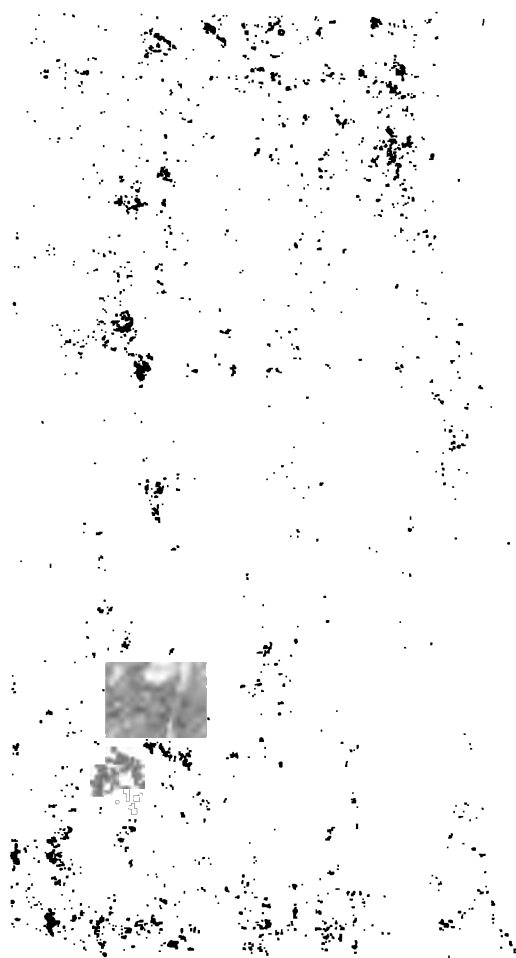
The young wife, seeing that she has nothing to fear, takes advantage of the bargaining to escape in order to attend to the yellow mealie cobs which are lying exposed to the sun on a low tree near, and we leave the ancient heathen to his meditations and regrets that he had not been able to squeeze us further. He also appeared dissatisfied with the "parsella" (present), which he begged ; but it is apparently a rule amongst Kaffirs to appear dis-

satisfied with whatever is given them, in the hope of getting more.

When we descend from the mountain we resemble prickly porcupines, for the long grass seeds of various kinds have penetrated our clothing everywhere, and many have already worked their way into our underclothing and skin, irritating it excessively. It takes long and patient search and extraction to rid ourselves of them, and every little while a fresh one makes itself evident, and requires a renewal of the process.

Guided by our swarthy Adonis, we walk forward to visit the last resting-place of the Shangani heroes—poor Allan Wilson and Borrow amongst the others. A large space is inclosed by iron wire fencing, and within it is a rough earth mound, encircled by unhewn granite blocks. At the head of the grave is a single wooden cross, made of a couple of branches, and a short distance away stands a packing-case containing the many wreaths sent in memory of the men who in their end so worthily upheld the finest traditions of our race.

We reverently place some of these on the grave and take a photograph, that I may fulfil a promise, to send a picture to a sorrowing friend. One of the onlookers has perhaps as much reason as any of us to mourn—a four-footed one. The old black grey-



1. 1914

2. 1915

3. 1916

4. 1917

5. 1918

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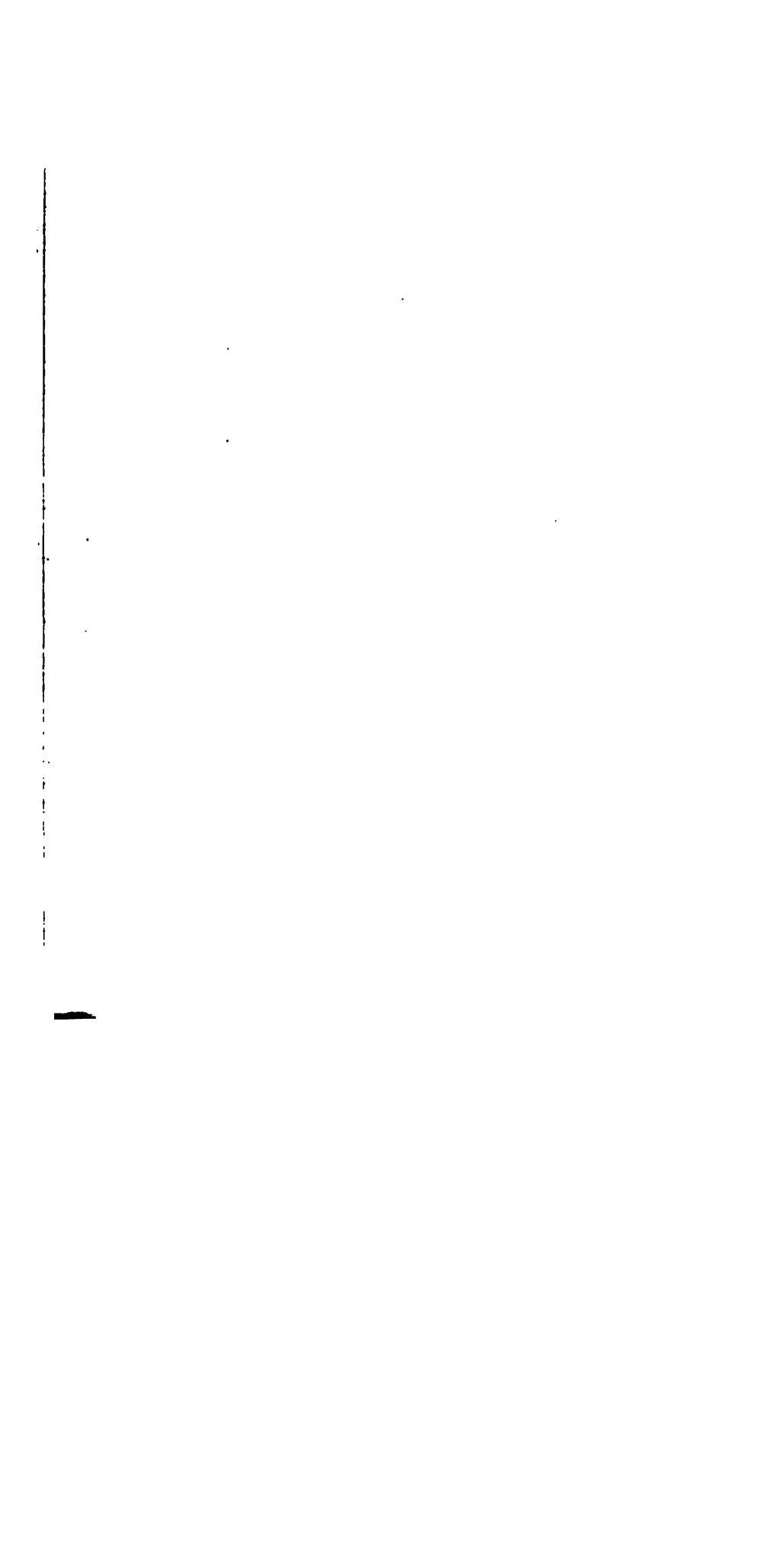
40. 1953

41. 1954

42. 1955



ZIMBABWE : ALLAN WILSON'S DOG AND HER MASTER'S RESTING PLACE.
THE GRAVE OF THE SHANGANI HEROES.



hound, Vixen, who now languidly awaits us at the foot of the grave, once owned as master the captain of the gallant band, now, all unknown to her, lying beneath her feet—Allan Wilson.

My first entrance into the apparently circular temple had been the evening before, alone, and shortly before the sun set. I passed in at what had evidently been a side entrance, the top part of which had been considerably broken away. The walls are very high here, though less so than on the opposite side, where the better class of dry building is. The ground is covered with a dense mass of scrubby vegetation, which made it difficult to distinguish the details of the inner divisions, and many of those straggling plants, with large green leaves and a yellow centred white flower (*Sparmannia africana*), so often seen in English greenhouses, aided in obscuring the ground, which, to make matters worse, was excessively rough on account of the many fallen bricks and half filled in trenches.

The whole inclosure is darkened by the large trees which are abundant inside, forming a circumscribed forest, and providing a dark roof, which shuts out even the brilliant African sunlight. The trees, as a rule, in the surrounding country do not approach in size some of those inside the temple, and I have heard it said that some of the species

there found are not known in the neighbourhood at all.

It is difficult to describe the feelings with which one is assailed on entering this great relic of ancient days ; the place is so awfully lonely, yet so fully evident of an intelligent human agency ; so alien to the savage world by which it is surrounded ; so vast, yet so shut in from the world ; so complex and incomprehensible in its design ; so mysterious in its intention and use ; and, withal, so comparatively perfect in its preservation, that as the shadows deepen in the labyrinthine passages and inclosures, it becomes pervaded by a weird and eerie mystery, which brings prosaic manhood almost as near the realisation of the mystic and wonderful as childhood attains in its unquestioning appreciation of the fairy tales which to it seem so marvellous and real. In the darkening twilight this gloomy, silent temple appeared to me as fully enchanted as the palace of the Sleeping Beauty—indeed, as an old brown rat ran over the stones and peered at me, motionless in my reverie, I felt that for the moment I might be excused by rational beings for fitting the superstition of the Indians to the ancient African temple and the four-footed inhabitant of these relics of departed greatness, so the rodent passed on his way, unharmed, unfrightened even, as the

embodiment of the soul of one of the old-time builders.

There are various inclosures or sub-divisions surrounded by the exterior wall, adequately described by Mr. Bent in his book (whether it be correctly named or not), "The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland;" these inclosures are set out in irregular positions, with a strange complexity of design, walls dividing one from another, with narrow doorways for intercommunication. Following the outer wall round, an inner wall converges, and is finally connected with the outer by one at right angles to the latter. In this is a small opening with rounded sides, which gives entrance to the innermost inclosure at a lower level, which contains the great conical tower, symbolic of the Phallic idea. It is situated within a few feet of the outer wall, and is fully thirty feet high, projecting above the wall, even though it has suffered some damage at the top, and is obviously incomplete. The perfection and regularity of its building and shape is its great feature, the slight curve of its tapering outline being beautiful in itself, and perfectly rendered by its builders. It is entirely solid throughout, and the stones, carefully replaced, show the spot in its base where Mr. Bent tested and proved this fact. This inclosure is excessively dark, being shaded both by the nearness

of the great walls and by the luxuriant roof of leaves. It is approached by at least four entrances, an important one facing right on the tower and leading into the most extensive of the sub-divisions. On the left, as one leaves by this opening, is a raised space, the purpose of which it is difficult to determine. Mr. Bent mentions the presence of a concrete floor here, which it was impossible for me to see owing to the thick undergrowth, and my lack of time to clear it away.

The entrance at the opposite end to that at which I had come in leads to perhaps the most extraordinary feature of the place. Guarded by a narrow mouth, a passage leads direct from this, perhaps most sacred inclosure, to the vestibule opposite the northern entrance of the main building, which would enable the innermost inclosure to be reached without exposure of or to the main interior of the building, and would render any invaders who had attempted to storm it, and had succeeded in entering the gate (the groove for which is plainly visible), liable to speedy death at the hands of defenders on the walls above as they rushed, one by one, down the very narrow passage. Somewhat more than three-parts of the way down is the small and inexplicable hole through the thick outside wall, and at a point opposite to this is a third wall on the inner side,





which forms a passage into the largest sub-division, out of which one can proceed into the tower inclosure, as before stated. There are thus no fewer than three walls at this point, separated by only sufficient room for one person to pass at a time; thus he would have to run a terrible gauntlet.

The main gateway itself is commanded by a large structure, which also protects and narrows the entrance of the passages to the interior, so that a hostile party, under ancient conditions of warfare, would experience a very rough time, even if it succeeded in breaking through the gate into the vestibule.

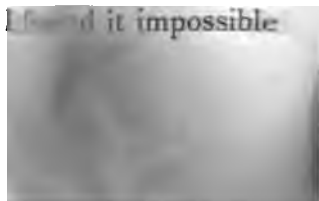
Opposite the main gateway, again, is a large circular inclosure, from which run party walls to the exterior wall, dividing the space into sections. It is easy to see that the stone work at this end of the temple is of very inferior quality to that at the tower end, the bricks used being uneven and irregularly placed.

The dampness of the undergrowth reminds one that in the rainy season this must be a very wet place indeed, when once the leafy roof has been penetrated by the heavy, tropical rain, and the question naturally arises as to how the builders protected themselves against rain, for no means of supporting a roof are visible in the walls, though it

may legitimately be objected that, so many of the interior walls being more or less in a state of collapse, any traces of arrangements for the support of a roof might well have disappeared. This lends some colour to the theory that the inhabitants adapted themselves (as even we English do) to the practice of the country, and lived in hagher cuts similar to those of the natives; yet it is hard to believe that there was no other covering either to some compartments of the temple or fortress or to the many remains of buildings in the valley between them. Certainly, pillars and beams in soapstone were found by Mr. Bent, but in very small quantity.

The ruins were at one time invaded by prospectors, who searched them without much, or any, respect for their preservation, and, for protective purposes, prospecting was forbidden within a certain radius. Considerable numbers of gold beads were found, similar to those which have been unearthed within recent months in various parts of Matabeleland in remarkable quantities, and also many beautifully made coils of gold wire, about the diameter of a lead pencil, as regular and perfect in workmanship as if they had been made by machine in Birmingham.

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to trace with any exactness owing to the rankness of the grass, it not having been burnt off on account of its being still early in the season. The temple appears to have formed one extremity of the settlement and fortifications, for from it extend walls which go so far as to almost encircle the kopje, but I was unable, on account of their semi-obliteration and the grass, to decipher the whole of these, and got some of my information from my companions, who were well acquainted with the locality. These particular ruins have long existed in rumour, but the intrepid traveller Carl Mauch was the first white man to view them, this occurring in 1871, and they remained half forgotten until comparatively recent years. Similar ruins to those of Zimbabwe exist on the Sabi river, but they are little known. Those who have seen them say that they are identical in outward appearance to those at Zimbabwe, though they are hardly so large; they are entirely unexplored, either by natives, who have a holy horror of them, or by white men, and it is said that the entrances are blocked up by huge stones. These are by no means the only ones, however, as buildings similar in character, and presumably therefore in origin, exist over a very wide area indeed, ranging from the course of the Sabi river on the east to far south of Bulawayo, and again to the north of Manicaland.

The course of the British South Africa Company in regard to these unique structures should be plain. There are those who will find objections to their being delivered over to the tender mercies of a mining company, who can hardly be expected to treat them in a reverential way, and whose operations must inevitably disarrange and destroy evidences which might be of value to the antiquarian and archæologist. This, however, is what has occurred, and, if it not already be too late, it would be well to appoint an official archæologist, who shall properly explore the ruins as they become known, and record all the information obtained in reference to them, making detailed plans. The ruins should be cleared of loose and tumbled down rubbish, and such stones as are obviously out of position and unnecessary to a proper conception of the building; they should also be freed from the destructive growth of certain of the trees, particularly those which have become rooted in the walls, and are gradually, yet surely, disintegrating them. All ancient ruins should be forbidden ground to the gold prospector, and such important ruins as those of Zimbabwe should be kept in good order, which would not be a matter of much difficulty.

As I passed out that evening by the great gate the tom-toms were sounding low, penetrating,

irregular, and clear from the kraals on the rugged mountain ranges extending on every hand. The reason for the persistence of the noise, continuous almost to the point of exasperation, day and night, was the celebration of the successful gathering in of the harvest. What a contrast are the sleek, orderly Sunday School children at home in England, who gather together in their places of worship to celebrate the harvest thanksgiving, with the dusky savages, who yet have a religious instinct in common which prompts them to express their thanks for benefits received, in however crude a fashion, to a dimly realised mystic power.

Emerging from the long grass by the temple when on my way to the leaky hut which was to be my shelter, I came suddenly on—and startled—a Kaffir family proceeding silently and in single file homewards. The paterfamilias was stalking proudly in front, bow and arrows on his shoulder, behind him a young woman almost ready for sale (I mean marriage), then, following close in the rear, the mother, “umfaas,” with a great basket of corn balanced on her head, and two little piccanins, either with a smaller basket on his and hers, strutting with independent air in her maternal wake.

Next morning I find my friends engaged in chaffing a Kaffir witch-doctor or medicine man; this

worthy is possessed of a number of carved bones, short and broad, which he throws into the air as he squats on the ground, getting his inspiration from their relative positions as they fall. We test him on one or two subjects, and on one he is particularly correct, it affecting one of my companions, and causing a hearty laugh. There is reason to believe that the witch-doctor, like others of his craft, only "divined" that which he knew to be the fact beforehand.

To test him, I ask how many children I have ; he tosses up his bones, looks excessively sagacious for a moment, then holding out his hands with fingers outspread (a method of counting), says "Maningi, baas!" We all, Kaffirs included, have a roar of laughter at his expense, though I can never be sure whether he meant it as a statement of present conditions, or, desiring to compliment me, ventured a prophecy. He is not in the least degree abashed by our incredulous laughter at what he must recognise to be an error, and, after considerable bargaining, I manage to purchase the bones, which it is sometimes difficult to obtain from them, it being done only under considerable pressure in this case.

I am quite surprised to see a Kaffir here and there carrying a long and apparently crude gun, looking like an old flintlock in the distance. They have the

art of making a very poor gunpowder, and probably are able to purchase the foreign made article from traders in the Portuguese country.

A fine young Kaffir offering a basket of honey-comb for sale reminds one of the honey-bird, which is to be found here. This bird will follow a man for a mile or more, doing everything in its power to attract his attention and persuade him to follow it, when it will infallibly lead him to a bees' nest, which it had previously discovered. This is a strange instance of a community of interest being recognised by a member of the lower creation, and not only recognised, but of its own volition made use of—a method of communicating with the human fellow-creature being devised !

The young Kaffir who brings the honey is a fair example of the Kaffir of the district, and is of quite a refined cast of countenance, the face being oval, shaping down to a pointed beard, short and neatly trimmed. The nose is clean cut, and by no means so widespread over the countenance as is that of the ordinary Kaffir, and the lips are thin. What admixture can this be due to, for it is certainly not a Kaffir type ?

There are some considerable insect pests in the country, but they trouble me little. One is a tick, which is liable to be met with in the long grass,

and is so determined as to bury its head in the skin, parting with its abdomen and life rather than be pulled out. The head remaining in, the skin festers, and causes an exceedingly painful and sometimes dangerous sore. One touch of nicotine from a pipe will cause them to forsake their meal very quickly, though. Another pest is a fly, which plunges its ovipositor into the skin before one is aware of its presence, and lays an egg there, the next event being that a maggot makes itself felt under the skin. Perhaps the worst is the "jigger," which makes a home under the skin, laying a bundle of eggs, which develop inside a little sac, to break which in the operation of extracting means to increase the trouble a thousandfold.

We ride back on the track by which we had come until within a few miles of Victoria, as a range of mountains (the Livouri) bars our way. We cut across the veldt for a few miles, until we reach the track which will take us to the A— mine.

This mine is situated in a most unhealthy district, and one which only a few months back was infested with lions. The kopjes abound with the African tiger, and baboons inhabit their rock tumbled summits. All the way we skirt the precipitous flanks of the Livouri mountains, the other side of which had been so prominent when viewed from

Zimbabwe ; on our right we file slowly alongside Mount Victoria, the outpost of the Nyaguzwe range, so that we are soon shut in entirely by precipitous hills, and plunge into very thick bush.

I am in my shirt-sleeves, my coat having been discarded owing to the closeness of the weather, and it has been spitting with rain ever since it was given to the Kaffirs, who took a short cut. We have eaten nothing save one small sandwich during the whole of the day, and my horrible horse has nearly succeeded in rattling the life out of me, so our anxiety to arrive at our destination before sundown has the best of excuses. We just succeed in doing this, and find ourselves in most romantic scenery, our hut commanding a fine view from a small eminence close to the spot where the lions plagued them to so great an extent shortly before our visit, taking no fewer than twenty-nine oxen before they were killed. The country is just of the character where wild animals might be looked for, being full of dongas, sluits, kopjes and broken ground, covered with thick bush.

Here I experience the only rain which I meet with during my sojourn of some months in Rhodesia, and the rain that fell in the night was of the thorough character which one finds within these tropical latitudes, a thoroughness which those who have not

stirred out of England will find it hard to appreciate.

The kindness which is so often found by the travelling stranger gives greater reason for our regrets that so many of our friends are either down with or just recovering from fever; and even high on the mountain this appears to be little better; whether it be that the hollows of the country, coupled with the thickness of the bush, prevents the miasma from being blown away, or that the prevailing wind brings it up from the low country beyond the Sabi river, it is difficult to say, but it certainly is a deadly fever hole.

Between us and the Nyaguzwe runs the old pioneer road, and Providential Pass, so called on account of its having proved the key to the problem which faced the pioneer column, of how to pass safely through the apparently impassable range of mountains which separated them from the great Mashonaland plateau. The column had been toiling up through difficult country from the low lying regions of Tuli; Mr. Selous, who was guiding them, had not been over this ground, and it was known to be no great distance from the Matabeleland frontier, so that, as it was obviously an awkward place to be attacked in, it was thought that Lobengula would perhaps take advantage of his opportunity. Hence,

when Selous and another, riding forward, saw the plain lands at the other extremity of Mount Victoria, it was a matter for congratulation that the dangerous place was passed without a sign of the possible enemy.

Having resumed our journey, we cross the old road, which is in fine condition here, and ascend the steep slopes of the mountain, the view expanding, and becoming more wonderfully lovely the higher we attain. Range after range of mountains stretch below us (for our elevated point of vantage is on the fringe of the great plateau, and looks miles across the low country), the course of the Tokwe river, which in its infancy I had crossed on my walk from Selukwe, winding between them, while the great Lundi river, into which it flows, lies beneath the blue heights beyond.

Almost immediately below us are the Tokwe flats, which were great hunting grounds prior to the occupation of the country, and where even yet antelope may be shot, as we later see practical evidence of. The Tokwe is a very large river in the rainy season, and is renowned for its crocodiles. In the early days a body of six police was crossing the drift on horseback, and one poor fellow was seized by the knee, his leg being nearly torn off by the saurian. With great difficulty he was brought into Victoria, and in the absence of surgical instruments his leg

was amputated by means of an axe and a saw. He died shortly after.

The situation of the Cotopaxi mine is magnificent. The mountain had been exceedingly steep, and my extraordinary steed, who stumbled incessantly when the road was like a billiard table, never slipped once during the time I rode him up part of the bad hill track. The buildings, situated at the portal of a mountain gorge, look from a height of three hundred feet between precipitous cliffs over a grand expanse of plain, dotted with apparently tiny trees. The hill tops around abound with baboons, and a tiger has been playing the bear with the domestic animals of the camp; one evening during the week a dog went on to the verandah, and was actually seized when there by a tiger, all that they heard more of the poor animal being a yelp, yelp, yelp of pain, getting fainter in the distance up the mountain. Another dog, which I examine, is slowly recovering from a severe wound in the neck from the same cause, he having escaped by the skin of his teeth.

One cannot help being impressed by the remote, wild, and almost inaccessible places that prospectors attain in their wanderings after the riches of the earth. Here, in this rocky cleft, haunted by the tiger and baboon, and given up to the life of wild nature, a tanned and travel-stained white man one day appears,

and breaks for ever its monotony. His wagon stands on the plain below, while his oxen graze carelessly over a mile or so of veldt, tended carefully by a black herd, who will bring them back safely to the thorn kraal, which protects them more or less thoroughly from their arch enemy, the lion, at night. He may be a hundred miles from the nearest settlement, and in the midst of a population which may at any moment rise on him, while his companions are perhaps a single white man (or none at all) and a few black servants, more or less trustworthy. Yet he penetrates the remote fastnesses of savage regions, his life in his hands, laying bare the gold in its hiding places, or, only too often, returning to camp with provisions exhausted, clothing in shreds, worn with incredible hardships, and with the bitter knowledge that toil, time, and expenditure have alike been in vain. How many a prospector leaves his bones under a little heap of stones, which a companion has reverently piled over his shallow grave.

When we reach the plain below it does not prove to be anything like the *plain* we expected from its appearance from above — indeed, it is excessively undulating. We cannot find the track (a narrow Kaffir foot-path through the long grass) which we had expected, the grass being so rank; and after vainly following a wagon track which leads us into the

heart of the bush, where the Kaffirs have been cutting wood for the mines, we decide to take a "bee-line" across country towards a spot in the opposite hills, where we believe we should find a third mine. My companion, as my guide, precedes me, makes a plunge into the long grass we are surrounded by, and positively disappears instantly from sight; though on horseback, the grass waves feet above his head, swallowing him up so entirely that I might be alone. It would hide the biggest elephant that ever existed, and I begin to speculate on the character of the game we may possibly meet, though it certainly would not be elephant.

Luckily we do not go more than a mile before we strike the path by a piece of good fortune; like all Kaffir paths, its sinuosity is remarkable, and as it is, of course, scarcely visible through the grass, our progress on horseback is of a mildly exciting character, particularly when complicated by suddenly visible holes or fallen trees. This lack of straight-forwardness on the part of Kaffir paths is attributed to the fact that Kaffirs have no idea of removing obstructions from their path, such as a fallen tree or an inconvenient rock, but walk round it, leaving, in the case of the tree, the ants to remove it in course of time, but never reverting to the old path.

Once we are confronted by an insignificant

streamlet, running over a somewhat muddy bed ; to my momentary surprise my horse refuses to face it, but after considerable persuasion he makes a dash forward, plunges in, and sticks in the bog—for such it proves to be—sinking in until his belly almost touches the water. A vigorous plunge or two lands his fore feet into somewhat firmer ground, and I am soon on the opposite side. This illustrates the curious instinct that horses have, enabling them often to distinguish between safe and boggy ground.

Here I descend the mine, the shaft being a hundred and twenty feet deep. I put one foot in a bucket, clinging to the wire rope with one hand, kicking the other foot against the timbers at each side to keep in the middle, and first spinning round like a top. I luckily have oilskins on and thick boots, for the bottom of that shaft is the wettest place imaginable. The poor naked Kaffirs engaged in drilling the holes for sinking the shaft are, of course, dripping, and covered with mud and candle grease. There is naturally very little room at the shaft bottom, and five or six boys are striking the drills, adding their loud grunts to the noise of their hammers, so that when I get down to within twenty feet of their heads I commence to yell and bellow to warn them of my approach. Roar as I may I

cannot make them hear, and it is not until I am within three feet of their upward striking sledge hammers that they become aware that another stroke will catch me or another second bring my bucket into violent contact with their heads.

Leaving the merry and hard-working company next morning, we start on our way home to Victoria, the ride passing practically without incident, save for our coming across another flight of locusts of great size. This is an ordinary occurrence enough, certainly, but to-day we get the sunlight reflected on the billion gauzy wings in a most remarkable and beautiful way. The near, individual effect is lovely enough, but between two kopjes, a mile away, it forms a dazzling, flickering brilliancy. They rise in scores of thousands as we pass, from the ground, the grass, and the crushed and overburdened trees; they dash into our faces, half blind the horses, and make us dizzy with their flapping myriads.

A mile or so out of the town we see the small brick structure used as a dynamite magazine. One day it was found broken into. The Kaffirs had actually burgled it (finding it unprotected), broken open some cases, and finally, presumably thinking it a sheltered place to spend the night in, had lit a fire in the middle of the magazine (a small enough building at the best), using the cases as seats. How

they escaped being blown into eternity it is difficult to say.

Victoria proves to be in a festive mood on my arrival, for the great racing event of the year is to come off on the occasion of a public holiday. The whole country round is represented on the race-course, and every soul in the town attends as a matter of duty, save the fever-stricken and the good Sisters who nurse them. The result is that we muster sixty-five in all, including the jockeys.

Some of the horseflesh would make the average frequenter of less remote race meetings stare ; indeed one horse, inevitably the last in the events dignified by its presence, might at home have graced a green-grocer's cart. But among the others are a few very tidy hacks, who are the subjects of the intensest interest and speculation. A "totalisator" occupies one end of the inclosure, competing heavily with the single bookmaker, who pours unmeasured, though kindly, contempt on the machine.

No pains have been spared to make the meeting as great a success as is possible with so limited a population, the course is wonderfully good, and the result is a very enjoyable day. The concluding event is a race for Kaffirs. This has been greatly looked forward to by those of the town and neighbourhood and it certainly appears to be popular amongst them,

judging by the number of starters. Fully a hundred assemble at the starting place a mile away, all shapes, ages, and sizes being represented, from the full-bodied sufferer from adipose tissue to the skinny piccanin of ten. The different effects of the distance and pace on them is quickly made manifest, for the compact body soon stretches out like a thin line of guttapercha in the distance. The race is finally won by a fine, well-built fellow, but the remainder come straggling in, never dreaming of giving up, albeit the race is won, the tiny piccanin, who comes in far and away the last, struggling manfully until he reaches the goal. The time of the winner is not taken, unfortunately, for it appeared fairly good.

A farmer's wife, come in from the country to witness the races, has lately undergone an unpleasant experience. A day or two previously, her husband being absent, a Kaffir in their employ, on being told by her to carry out some order, declined to do so, and insulted her. My informant, an old gentleman, weak from fever, saw by the expression of the good lady's face that the words were obnoxious, and tried to sjambok the insolent fellow, but the blackguard was too quick for him, and seized an axe lying near, evidently meaning mischief. But he had a frontiers-woman to deal

with, who was fully capable of rising to such an emergency, for, seizing a shot gun, lying ready loaded for the benefit of a troublesome hyæna which had been rendering night hideous, she brought it to the "ready," the Kaffir making off at his best speed as she did so. She took a flying shot at sixty yards, and caught him fairly, making an excellent pattern in the right place, and leaving him to invoke the good services of his laughing compatriots in the tedious work of extraction.

Victoria, next morning, has relapsed into its usual quietness, perhaps more than usual, for some have not been fortunate in the sweepstakes, and others are suffering from the effects of the unusual excitement and its concomitants.

CHAPTER VI.

TO NORTHERN MASHONALAND.

THE peculiarities of oxen as beasts of traction are fully indulged in on our way northwards from Victoria to Thaba Insimbe. Being fresh and somewhat badly broken-in to the special work of coaching, which involves trotting, often through deep sand, they take matters occasionally into their own hands, and suddenly bolt at right angles out of the road on to the veldt ; then, on being turned by the boy racing up whip in hand, belabouring them unmercifully, rush once more at right angles on to the opposite side, sometimes crashing into stalwart bushes or half tilting the coach over by running a wheel over one of the ant heaps which sometimes stud the veldt. We have six oxen in our team, driven only by the whip and by word of command, which word usually consists of the name of the particular animal objurgated, and is enunciated with great emphasis and lung power either by the white driver in front of the coach or by the Kaffirs running alongside. Reins would be useless, and should the





leading oxen tend too much to one side, the name of the ox on the other side is yelled out, and his companion gets a swishing sting from the long whip.

The Kaffirs accompany the coach the whole distance from Victoria to Thaba Insimbe, a journey of twenty-two hours right off the reel, and alternately run alongside or stand on the near end of the dissel-boom (pole), driving, without intermission, for the whole time. One wears only a ragged shirt, and, though the night is very cold, he gets into a bath of perspiration by his extreme exertions in running and thrashing, and then exchanges with the other boy, standing still and starving in the cold night air. How they exist for a month is a marvel.

About fifteen miles out is a Makalanga "stadt," which is one of the most remarkable in the country. Very picturesquely the little huts are perched on the naked boulders of a kopje, which consists of nothing but these boulders thrown together disjointedly above the level of the plain. On some of them three or four huts are placed, there being barely stepping room between them or around them; all are inaccessible without the aid of a ladder placed on the top of some lower boulder. Again, on some stones only one hut rests, or a wee granary, out of which I see the squirrels race, frightened at my approach.

The eaves of some huts absolutely hang over the rounded edge of the boulders, with thirty or forty feet of space below them. How often the maternal Makalanga bosom must be racked with anxiety!

Not having been warned of the impossibility of getting food *en route*, I find myself very short of food during the day, and experience an illustration of the axiom which travellers by coach in such countries should take to heart, viz., never to travel without ample supplies; for, though time may be short on a journey, it appears long indeed to an empty stomach, and the chance exists at certain times of the year of the coach being stopped on the river bank by the rivers "coming down," preventing either forward or backward progression for a long or short time. Such a cause has been known to keep the coach at one place for three weeks, resulting in untold hardships to the passengers.

I sleep that night with my head on the seat of the wagon and my feet projecting far over the splashboard. The night proves exceedingly cold, and the oxen bolt on two or three occasions, once getting the wagon (for this is what the coach is, to all intents and purposes) firmly rammed into a tree, which got well fixed between the wheel and the body, necessitating a vast amount of noise, considerable waste of time, and, on our part, useless temper

at the interruption to our much needed but hardly satisfying sleep.

At one point during the night we outspan near some huts. We find that these are inhabited by a lonely trader—quite a young fellow—who kindly invites us to have a cup of hot tea. The tea proves to be “pelile,” though, as do both sugar and milk, so black coffee, without these ingredients is substituted. This man had settled down to trading at the end of the war, and informs us that he had forwarded for exhibition in London one of Lobengula’s revolvers, which he had himself picked up in the king’s hut. His daily life now consists, as does that of many another, in travelling for perhaps a couple of months at a time among the kraals for many miles round, bartering beads, limbo, or salt for mealies. These he would purchase in small quantities at a time, collecting it into bulk for sale to the miners or townspeople. He therefore buys retail and sells wholesale—somewhat a reversal of the ordinary conditions of trade. The occupation is said to be very fairly profitable, but it must need much compensation for the continual isolation which is involved.

At Thaba Insimbe (or Iron Mine Hill), the Victoria branch line connects with the main one between Bulawayo and Salisbury, and I learn that

there is a prospect of my having to spend at least a couple of days in waiting; indeed, I am assured that recent coaches have been full to overflowing, so that I may be forced to remain for the next week's coach, only to run the same risk over again.

Here there is nothing whatever to recommend a sojourn, save the game around, which is fairly abundant. There is but little business during the week, no natives worth speaking about, no scenery, no township, and but one or two Englishmen.

The down coach passes us here, and its passengers report that they heard a lion roaring during the night, not a great distance from the road. This was in the Sebaque district, not many miles away, where there appear to be a fair sprinkling of them. This adds interest to the explorations of the country round, by means of which I manage to kill time during the enforced "*détente*." Taking my gun, I ramble over the country side, enjoying the fresh, clear air and life-giving sunshine, one morning exploring the haunts of a lion which had inhabited an eminence called the "Black Kopje" a few months before.

I also mount many of the higher kopjes round in order to get a good view and idea of the lay of the country. On one occasion I halt and peep over the top boulders carefully; the side of the hill is covered

with forest, and is fairly steep; but below is a great patch of grassy veldt, bare of trees, and sloping gradually up from the dry pools. Say a thousand yards away a half dozen oxen take their ease in the long grass, so it appears, and though I am doubtful on the point I forbear to approach. On my proceeding, one suddenly moves and starts off at an ungainly run, the others following suit; this clears away all doubt as to the identity of the creatures, for their flapping, white fringed wings, long legs and black bodies proclaim them instantly to be wild ostriches. Their wings flap regularly as they run along at a tremendous pace, but they slow up as they enter the line of bush, and stalk calmly in. When I arrive at the spot there are no ostriches to be seen, as might be expected, but I see plenty of fresh buck spoor which I dare not follow up, as it is essential to keep in proximity to the store that no chance may occur of missing the coach.

That day I lunch off sable antelope, shot by one of the residents here about six miles away, and in my hut (through the roof of which the stars shine at night) are the great curved tusks of a fierce warthog.

From the top of the "Black Kopje" I look out for the coach which I fondly hope will take me onwards. Hence it was that the lion would inter-

rupt the slumbers of the inhabitants of the huts, three or four hundred yards away, taking his stand on the smooth black surface of the naked granite. Of late months discretion has apparently replaced valour, and his Majesty has removed to less exciting and perhaps better stocked quarters. More troublous times are before the tiny centre of civilisation, however, for its future is to be fire and desolation at the hands of either revolted Matabele or of the Makalaka curs, who take advantage of the strife between their late oppressors and those to whom they owe deliverance and safety. But of course not much else can be expected of so degraded a race.

With what interest I watch the coach roll up, eagerly scanning the interior and searching in vain for an empty seat! Not one remains, and the coach, not being a saloon, boasts of none on the top, provision being made for the driver on a level with the floor of the coach. At Gwelo, I am told, two passengers were refused the doubtful privilege of lying on the mail bags. This is a cruel enough fate, even if there be head room, as many a South African traveller knows to his cost. Here, to make things worse, there are hardly eighteen inches between mail bags and roof, and only a short longitudinal space, the pile of bags being heaped in a conical form. This position is taken by two persons, and I, deter-

mined to stay no longer kicking my heels to no purpose, ask nobody's leave and clamber up on to the top of the coach, essaying to make a bed amongst the hummocks and excrescences of the tarpaulin-covered baggage. A chilled steel cannon ball could not call that resting place a soft one, though half an inch of dust to some extent ameliorates matters.

When we start I find I shall have to hold on for dear life, as the swaying and jolting of the coach is so greatly exaggerated at that height, say from twelve to fourteen feet above the ground. The hardest of pioneers could not pretend that the situation, at its best, in any degree approaches passable comfort, and as occasionally we get a bad jolt over a big stone, or a succession of them, my whole body is thrown into the air (albeit I am clinging closely with both hands and feet to the baggage and the low rail of the coach), meeting the protuberances of my resting place again with abominable force.

During the day the fierce sun's rays, attracted and doubled in intensity by the coach roof, bake me, but during the night, commencing from the instant after sunset, I rejoice that I am wearing my warmest winter clothing, for as the sun goes down the wind gets up, and that wind is of the bitterest description; especially piercing is it to the unhappy drivers and

the shivering occupant of the roof. Rolled up in my kaross, everything filthy from the clouds of dust, I cannot keep warm, and the long twelve hours of the night seem never ending. I get a dusty corner of tarpaulin to shelter my face from the cutting wind (dirt absolutely counts for nothing under such conditions), and try to fit myself to better effect between the angles of portmanteaux and handbags. Luckily, in one sense, progress is painfully slow, an average of but two and a half miles an hour being attained, on account of the road passing through deep sand. This tries the oxen to the utmost, but the slow speed gives me some opportunity of sleeping even under these unpropitious circumstances. I would wake up as we give a particularly bad lurch or cannonade across a drift or gully, always to find myself lying spreadeagled, with my hands glued on to the handle of a Gladstone bag or guncase, and my feet tucked under the rails, literally clinging to them with my toes.

How welcome is the dawn in such circumstances ! One appreciates warmly the attributes which probably aided in giving the sun-worshippers their religion, for immediately the sun's disc appears there comes a glow of warmth through the whole of one's half-frozen being, and one awakes from the semi-hibernating condition which the cold engenders.

The Sebakwe river has been crossed during the night, it being impressed on my memory by a particularly severe series of jolts. For some distance it traverses a district said to be rich in gold deposits, which are rapidly being proved. Although we hear



A MATABELE "VOORLOOPER."

no lions, as the occupants of the down coach did, there is no doubt that they are plentiful in the district, and we see practical evidence of the fact in the measures taken for defence and protection of the

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cattle and their herds at the stages where we change our teams. The thorn hedges comprising the walls of the cattle kraals are built very substantially, strong branches being interwoven, and are of exceptional height, while the herds themselves secure their persons from leonine attack by building nests up a tree inside the kraal, these being only attainable by means of a slight branch placed against the trunk. I photograph one, making the herd ascend into his small and rickety home ; but his nest is not to be compared with one which I had no opportunity of picturing, it being quite an elaborate hut, well built and thatched, some fifteen or twenty feet above ground. Another house for the herd is simply formed in the kraal wall, which is of great thickness at the particular spot, and is strengthened by vertical poles, the entrance being made exceedingly narrow, and opening direct into the cattle kraal. To a European this proximity might appear to have its disadvantages, but to a Kaffir, flies, smells, dust and dirt do not greatly signify.

A hardship on this line is the lack of feeding accommodation. We only get meals at two places during two days. One consists of a horrid mess of tinned sausages, boiled, broken, and lukewarm, with an insufficiency of bread ; while the other provided us with some lovely bastard eland, toothsome and

delicious, though I am informed that it is the merest chance that we fall in for so fair a meal.

At other times we take advantage of the outspan to adjourn to the shelter of the cattle kraal hedge, making a meal of what provisions we have provided ourselves with before starting. The dishes are heterogeneous, for one would provide some raw beefsteak, if early on the journey, another bread, or tinned tongue, bully beef, German sausage, tea or coffee, so between all of us we manage to have a rough but fairly satisfactory meal. As a rule the more substantial one would take place at night, and, perhaps adjourning to the interior of the cattle hut, should there be one, we would all squat or lie round the fire with a lump of bread and meat in one hand, and a japanned metal mug in the other. It sounds primitive, but it serves its purpose.

The contractor who runs the coaches has let the line get into a very bad condition, it being the fag end of the contract, and on several occasions we do not find our relays of oxen at the stages, and our poor exhausted brutes have to run a second section, doing double work along a heavy road sometimes twenty miles or more.

The second day we have some genuine amusement. I see a koodoo cross the road some three hundred yards ahead, and later on, as we are

outspanned by a river, I see a crocodile on the bank a short distance from a pool in the stream. He is apparently about ten feet long, and as I get my rifle to bear he moves toward the water, whereupon I take a running shot at him at about a hundred yards, missing him by a hairsbreadth. I am troubled by the blue spectacles, which are a comfort in the glare and dust, and as we run forward, the shot having seemed to turn him toward the next pool, I take them off to change them for others, but before it is possible to assume them, he has run awkwardly before me, and disappears in the pool not thirty yards away.

We get to Charter very late at night. This outlandish place consists of a store, a telegraph office, and a police camp. It must be a very slow place to live in, especially if one have to depend on the store for rations, for it is here that we suffer from the squashy, lukewarm sausages, though some excuse must be made in that the coach (though as usual) is many hours late. They live in my memory yet!

I ransack the store to find a neckerchief, having felt the cold so greatly the night before, but the nearest approach to one to be found is a very common towel, which serves its purpose sufficiently well, but is hardly stylish or soft.

That night, or what remains of it, for the oxen are averse to being inspanned, and cause several exhibitions of agility on the part of the drivers by the adept use of their great horns, is passed in the same manner as the previous one, though fatigue and custom enable me to sleep better. What is more, I manage to protect myself more thoroughly from the cold wind, which is as keen and bitter as it was the night before, if not more so, as we cross the bleak plains known as Charter Flats.

Our oxen seem to be aware that they are being treated in a manner which is uncustomary and unkind, for some break away from the line which they form in order to permit the voorlooper to put the thongs over their horns before being led to their places. Then there is a hue and cry, and enormous exertion on the part of Kaffirs and driver, while some of those remaining in line begin to move impatiently away. When caught, the awkward animal has to be pulled to his place, and sometimes succeeds in getting away with a frisk and a jump again. He will then apparently submit, and duck one of his horns ready for the yoke to be put on his neck, but just as the driver leans over to do so, the mild-eyed beast will give a vicious, clever thrust with his six-foot horns, causing a stampede and angry yell on the part of his would-be victim. It is

marvellous with what dexterity and smartness the sleepy animal can manipulate these enormous weapons, and a bad-tempered animal (or "skellum") will sometimes inflict deadly wounds on the unaccustomed. Some individuals are seen to have lost their tails, or at any rate, a portion of them. This arises from no cruelty, nor from the custom of accelerating the animal's progress by twisting the appendage, but from the effects of inoculation against lungsickness. If carefully done, the tail being the position chosen for inoculation, the animal does not lose it, but if the inflammation is permitted to rise too high this does occur.

We have only sixty-seven miles now between us and Salisbury, but it is a long sixty-seven miles, much of it being over the tedious flats, heavy in sand. It takes us twenty-four hours to cover the distance, and we therefore do not arrive in Salisbury until midnight of the third day from Thaba Insimbe. Then begins the fun to worn-out travellers.

The City of Salisbury has been sapiently divided into two portions, which were originally separated from each other by a swamp, it being wickedly hinted by those who may not have gained in the transaction that the British South Africa Company, having run short of cash after the foundation of the first township (called the "Kopje"), caused a

demand for "stands" on the other side, about a mile away, by building all the public offices and government buildings there. The consequence of this is, that now the swamp is drained, Salisbury appears to have been laid out on the scale, say, of Johannesburg, and business men on the Kopje side have to waste precious time in traversing the uninteresting stretch between there and the "Causeway," have they affairs over there. It was felt to be a considerable grievance at the time, for so much money had been spent in erecting good buildings on the Kopje side, where it was naturally expected the centre of the town would be. It is, however, an open question whether the town has not on the whole been developed more quickly by reason of this step, spite of some obvious inconveniences. In every direction the swamp has been drained and houses erected.

The last stage of our journey, like the first from Bulawayo, has been done with mules instead of oxen, these having met us at the Hanyani river, and we consequently make better time. The town is asleep at the late hour of our arrival, but we do our best to arouse it by means of the bugle, waking the echoes of the kopje under which the main street runs.

We (and our baggage) are ignominiously bundled off the coach, and are given to understand by the

man in charge of the coach office, who appears to be in an unequable frame of mind, that *we* can go on with the coach to the Causeway if we like, but that we certainly shall not have our baggage until the morning, as he desires that it shall be deposited in the office. On one gentleman protesting that he wants his nightclothing and suchlike necessities, and placing his small bag in the coach again, highly unparliamentary language is used, his bag is torn out of his hands and thrown violently on to the ground. In my ignorance of the topography of the town I decide to try to get my small articles, and walk over to the hotel, so, as the things are taken off the coach, I succeed, unobserved, in placing them on one side in the dark. On the man in charge entering the office with the other articles, I quietly sneak off down the road and inquire my way of the single person to be seen. To my consternation, I am told that it is a long way to go, and difficult for a stranger to find on a pitch-dark night, so that the mild and quiet way of dealing with my irascible friend of the coach office proves to have its disadvantages. I had no idea that the two portions of the town were so far separated, and getting general directions, I plunge down the road and across the dry swamp. The walk seems long indeed, and the track crosses veldt, road, and deep

ditches, but finally striking the post office, being guided thither by its light, I arrive at the hotel to find it closed for the night.

This is somewhat discouraging after such a journey, and as continued knocking fails to rouse anyone, I wander round to see for myself if any rooms are available. A light in a window attracts me, and knocking at the door, I enter a sleeping apartment. The occupants are a couple of young fellows in a distinct state of exaltation, one of whom most amiably invites me in and makes me drink some cold coffee. Then, with an exuberance of loving kindness, almost painful, he leads me round to a room and knocks. Something quite incomprehensible is shouted out in smothered tones, and then a feminine voice exclaims loudly, "What do you come bothering here for? *Go away!*" The latter words with unmistakable emphasis. None the less, the kindness of my guide soon finds me a very comfortable resting place, certainly the best I have experienced in Rhodesia.

Next morning the kindness of an old friend offers me the benefit of his hospitality, giving one more evidence of the courtesy and attention met with everywhere, even at the hands of new and slight acquaintances, or, indeed, at those of complete strangers.

Of the life in Salisbury, with a charming circle of acquaintances, it is naturally impossible to say much, though it may be recorded that of a party of six meeting at lunch at a private house, only one besides myself failed, a few months later, to put in an appearance either at Bow Street or before the death-condemning judge at Pretoria, in connection with the expedition which one of them led into the Transvaal.

On one more person is it possible to touch but lightly—a young lady, whose courage, pluck, and experience would put to shame many an old hand at adventure. Two tigers and a full grown lion has she killed with her own rifle. And her experience of rough pioneer work dates back to the early days of the occupation, when the barest necessities of life were often wanting. Her husband tells me the short story of her adventure with the lion, it being to the effect that some two years previously, when travelling on the Umtali Road in their wagon, they had been troubled by lions, who felt a natural craving for their oxen. Determined to wait for the invaders, having suffered from their interruptions for a night or so, she took her seat at the back of the wagon, her husband being in the front, facing the oxen. The night was very dark, and they waited for a long time in complete silence. Of a

sudden the rifle at the rear of the wagon woke the echoes of the night, and the plucky lady's husband ran round to see her stiffen the intruder with a second shot, the great brute lying only eight or ten yards away.

The cooking arrangements would sometimes make an English housewife smile, for, in our case, dinner is cooked by the Kaffirs in the open air, that is, in the back garden, opposite the stables. This may sound strange, but the results, aided by a wonderful mixture of Kaffir and English words on the part of his master, are really very good indeed, considering the elementary appliances used by the Makalanga boy rejoicing in the name of "Ginger." It might puzzle a cook at home to be told to "Tata lo cheese to lo other kaiea and put lo sinqua on a sichi, but be sure icona forget lo table cloth!" It is wonderful how well the Kaffir mind grasps this extraordinary jargon as a rule.

One day I meet an old friend last seen in the Transvaal, now looking a very ghost from fever. Shortly after his arrival in Salisbury he had gone down on business to Fontesvilla, the terminus of the Beira railway at the coastal end, some sixty miles up the Pungwe river. It has been stated that the death rate of this settlement is about forty per cent. per annum from fever, and it is no wonder that my friend

got a strong dose which for three months laid him on his back in hospital under the care of the good Mother Patrick, whose name is a household word for goodness and charity all over Mashonaland. He tells me that nobody need be surprised at the mortality, for the air was full of foul smelling malaria, and during the night the miasmatic mist envelopes the whole district, remaining until the early sun commences its dispersion. Added to these uncomfortable influences was the stinking, insanitary state of portions of the settlement. On the whole, therefore, I am inclined to the conclusion that Fontesvilla is a place to avoid.

One morning I set out in a sulky, drawn by four mules, for Lo Magondi, and have been informed that the district, or at least parts of it, is infested with lions. I have also received the comforting assurance that I shall have to sleep on the veldt. Doubtless one becomes accustomed to the idea that lions may come about at a time when one is more or less exposed and at their mercy ; but at first one does not relish the idea, and I am consequently not altogether sorry that I can arrange to pass the night *en route* at the camp of a hunter whose huts are about forty-three miles from Salisbury. On the other hand, while one person said that I could not pass a week on the Umvukwe without hearing or

seeing lions, there were others who said they had been half a dozen times through the district and had never heard the ghost of one, all of which is explained by the fact that lions are nomads, and may be in one place one night and twenty miles away the next, or more.

My sulky, kindly lent me for the occasion, accommodates two, the Cape boy who is to drive being the second person. We start at a terrific pace, and the first action of the mules is to turn slap round in the main street and bolt into, or nearly so, a butcher's shop. This makes an encouraging start, but a little hard work tames them before long. Our road lies firstly through open veldt, once having passed a farm three miles out and its tree-covered kopjes. Then Mount Hampden heaves in sight and remains so for an unconscionable length of time. This mountain, which was the *point d'appui* of the pioneer force, is an important landmark, and rises, like Mount Victoria, steeply out of the surrounding plain to a great height.

We outspan at the first river, the Gwibi, a bare, uncomfortable spot, where had once been some kind of a hut, but where now are only a few mealie husks and bare rock. There are a few half-starved trees, but no wood that we can use as fuel, so we have unwillingly to waste considerable time in collecting what scraps can be found within a space of several

acres. We get our food out, for a nice stock of provisions has been laid in, including several tins of what are called "road-rations," consisting of three quarters of a pound of meat and the same quantity of different vegetables. The boy opens the tin, pours its contents into my billy, adds a cupful of water, sticks it on to the fire, and soon serves it on to a plate, piping hot. Afterwards, coffee, marmalade and beautiful bread, tinned fruit, &c., make a most luxurious roadside feast.

Here and there I see a small buck, and perhaps a jackal, bounding over the tussocks of grass a hundred yards away. Later, a great sable antelope crosses the path, visible but for an instant in a small opening in the bush five hundred yards away; this is the first specimen I have seen of this noble buck. I get no shot at this game, but bring down a brace of birds which come in useful in the evening. At one spot I see something, though quite undiscernible what, disappearing through the longish grass to the rear of a tree which is surrounded by a patch of very tall grass, probably twenty yards across. I run in to see if I can catch a sight of anything, but only find a spot where the grass had been crushed down by a large recumbent animal. When once into the grass one is of course quite lost to the outside world, for the tops meet feet above one's head, and not

much could naturally be seen beyond one's nose ; the delicious sensation results of not knowing what one may be face to face with the next moment ! The senses are all alive at such a time, for any game might lie within arm's reach and be entirely unseen. One feature here particularly is the circular clumps of this long grass, perhaps only eight or ten feet through, and six or seven in height, affording excellent hiding places for any wounded animal.

For the first time I drive a four-in-hand. My coach is a shabby, dust-covered sulky, my sleek and high spirited cattle are four large mules (which require the usual amount of thrashing), and my Hyde Park is a remote portion of the Zambesi valley. The road is quite indescribable in parts ; I have never been on a worse, even in Africa. The sluits are something terrific in their steepness, and so covered with hummocks that, as we rush down pell mell we are thrown violently against one another one instant, and against the framework of the hood at the opposite side, the next. How the little vehicle stands it I cannot make out ; I have seen some "roads" in Australia, but never one to equal this ; it has had very few vehicles over it when once E——'s farm is passed, and the main road to Lo Magondi proper is left.

It is dark when we arrive at E——'s camp, where

and a guttural giggle. Spite of this small personage's imperfect English, supplemented by my imperfect Dutch and Kaffir, I get a hut to sleep in, nearly filled with sacks of meal, strips of fresh biltong, and various odds and ends.

But there is a bedstead, made of poles fixed in the ground with a netting of raw hide strips strung over them, and on this is a thickness of four inches of long, coarse grass, which makes a fair enough mattress. Mindful of my experience at a previous camp, I search long and thoroughly for snakes and scorpions, happily satisfying myself that they are absent.

When I sit down to dinner I am besieged by a horde of starving cats, who ravenously devour what I give them and cut me dead after dinner as a token of gratitude—all save Tom, who probably hopes for more. The dining-room is similar to one I saw at Selukwe, and owes its charm to the fact that its pictures are real bits of landscape, there being an annular aperture running (save in respect to the posts supporting the top portion of the wall and the roof) right round the hut, and giving, as I find in the morning, lovely views on three sides.

I have a letter to the manager of the Ayrshire mine, but know that I may meet him on the road, so when I hear, far below in the valley, the "Ah now's"

and other cries of the drivers of a bullock team, I am not surprised soon to hear English voices speaking outside the hut. We are soon engaged in listening to an account of the shooting of a fine sable antelope that morning by one of the party, the horns of which were over forty inches in length—a very respectable size.

Little did I think that I should next hear of the miraculous escape of this gentleman and a portion of his party, who, on the revolt of the surrounding Mashonas, made his way into Salisbury after experiencing the most incredible hardships and dangers. Some of his party were killed, and at our present resting place he was attacked and fired upon.

As for the swarms of lions to be found round E——'s camp, it hardly seems an exaggeration to use the term, for within the last three weeks he has shot two and mortally wounded another, to say nothing of previous ones.

One met his end in the following fashion: E—— woke suddenly one night, hearing a lion grunting just outside his hut, and found that the impudent brute was calmly meandering about the camp, in and out between the huts. As he said, in recounting it afterwards, it was hardly good enough to pit his eyes against those of a man-eating cat in almost absolute darkness, so he took his rifle

in hand, resting it on the window ledge, waiting patiently, while all the time he could hear the lion exploring the various articles about the camp. Finally the noises ceased, and he became aware of an enormous shadow, which silently, suddenly, and without apparent motion, existed almost within touch of his gun, where before had been murky space. The shadow was almost indistinguishable in the gloom, and the sights of the rifle were invisible, so, guessing at his aim, he fired. The instant before the silence of the world around had been intense, even the wind was not sighing in the trees, and the dogs had temporarily ceased their ineffective yapping ; but after that shot all the furies of sound might have been let loose, and the echoes of the pass resounded a tremendous expression of the rage and vicious resentment of a great and savage beast. Later in the evening of my visit I hear the unmistakable roar in the far distance along the valley, and can well imagine that no more violent contrast could be obtained by the "sensation hunter" than is given by that instantaneous change from the awe-inspiring silence of the mountains in darkness to the fierce and vengeful roar of a lion not ten feet away.

The bullet did not kill, however, but, as was clearly discernible next morning, broke the shoulder, and, retiring two or three yards, the enraged " King

of the Beasts " (a sarcastic title when spoken by Mashonalanders), lay down, groaning and roaring. He was now quite covered by the darkness, and it would have been sheer madness to have gone outside to approach him, so dawn was patiently waited for. Before sunrise the lion made up his mind that it would be undesirable for daylight to find him within such uncommonly disagreeable proximity to a renowned hunter, and slowly dragged himself away, with many groans and growls, in the direction of the farther valley, resting occasionally to give vent to his wounded feelings in roars. At the break of dawn his spoor was traced from the pool of blood a few feet from the hut window, where he had laid down after his wound, down to the banks of the river, which straggles across the valley. It was evident that he had been hard hit, for there was much blood, and he had rested several times on his way down. At the river bank a diversion was effected by a fine lioness springing up, and she was chased and finally shot within a few hundred yards. She was probably the mate of the wounded lion, who was never recovered.

All this happened a few days before my arrival, and but a fortnight before three boys were sleeping in a scherm (similar to those I slept in during my tramp from Selukwe), and were taken by lions, who

had either braved the watch fires or jumped the hedge; all three boys were killed. Within the last few days a gentleman about thirty miles away had lost a horse from the same cause; and, as is the custom of these marauders, the camp is still being menaced by nocturnal visits, which are bound to result in fresh losses if a bullet does not put an end to them. It will be seen, therefore, in spite of the general incredulity expressed about "lion stories," that in Mashonaland these pests are by no means creatures of the imagination.

Safe in a hut, with a real wooden door to it (though there is no latch, and a kitten might push it open), there is no need for lions, real or imaginary, to disturb me, though there is, in the occasional distant roar, some stimulant for the exercise of fancy. A couple of hours before sunrise I awake, fancying I hear a noise outside, and the new moon having just risen, I can see a shadow on the ground outside through the twelve-inch space under the door. At the same instant I feel something heavy descend on my body, and a set of claws pierce my flesh. Naturally flinching at the pain, I jump up quickly. Seizing my rifle I search in the darkness for my dreaded assailant, finding in the glaring eye flashing out of the gloom the object of my nocturnal fears. Shall I aim at that green and angry eye, or

shall the bullet pierce that portion of black space which should represent the heart? I am holding hasty communion with my thoughts, when a sudden motion, and a small black form in the doorway disillusion me, and with the traditional landlady I exclaim, "It was the cat!"

It appears that as a rule the opening under the doorway is blocked up with stones to prevent the inroads of the cats upon the stores, but that they had been in the habit of outwitting their master by using the very small opening above my couch, hardly to be dignified by the name of window (hidden as it is by the eaves of the roof), as a means of attaining their desired end—the long strips of biltong kept in store. Unaware of my presence, the cat had jumped from the window on to my recumbent body, and, startled by my sudden motion, struck its claws into me on jumping off. I frighten them away once, but one escaping my observation, continues operations on the biltong for the rest of the night, and I do not feel inclined to interfere again.

Mashona Kaffirs appear to make it a principle never to be so foolishly weak as to appear satisfied with their remuneration or a present. Two had carried my small amount of baggage from the sulky up to the huts of their master (a service one is

accustomed to expect without question, or idea of fee or reward), but when they come to me afterwards for a present, and I give them some tobacco and a few beads from my rather slender store, they grumble for the rest of the evening. Their repeated sour looks and grumbles rather disgust me, for many a man would give them more kicks than halfpence. On my departure in the morning I wait for them to take my small bags down after the driver has told them to do so, but they slouch about, knowing what is expected of them, but evidently intending to indicate that they would make a move when I offer them a satisfactory "parsella." As a newcomer to the country, I have been in the habit of dealing far more gently with Kaffirs than is often the rule, it being said that if one talk gently or persuasively, the average Kaffir gains the impression that one does not mean what one says, or is afraid. On this occasion it really seems as if this is the case, for having sufficient of a load myself, and not desiring another tug up the hill, I get somewhat annoyed at the attempt to bounce me, and determine to assume a different attitude. With my rifle in hand, I summon all the latent fierceness of my mild nature, and shout shortly and sharply, "Tata lo impashli—Hamba, chercha" (Take the baggage—Go, hurry). The savage, com-

manding, and imperious tones issuing from a five foot five atom of white humanity has its due and proper effect on my black brethren, and with every expression of respect and reverence they take it all down at express speed. Mindful of the fact that a Kaffir on taking service under a white man considers that he is only bound to serve *him*, or those whom he personally directs him to serve, I magnanimously forget the sluggishness of a few minutes before, and present each with some more beads. It is quite easy to see that they are in reality satisfied, indeed pleased, but the innate greed of the Kaffir mind again asserts itself, and they absolutely cannot prevent themselves from calling my "*parsella*" *piccanin*, and asking for more. Had I endowed them with the whole of my worldly belongings as a return for the slightest service, they would still have grumbled, haggled, and attempted to extract a further quantity.

The road next day is very rough, having only recently been cut through the bush, where but a bridle track before existed. It passes through very mountainous country, covered with thick bush, with an occasional fantastic rock-kopje, or group of enormous anthills, looking like the work of millions of generations of termites.

Fourteen miles onward we cross a river, the

Meninie, the drift being excessively bad, and needing only a small rise of the river to make it indeed dangerous. We see a Kaffir obtaining water at the drift, and a couple of hundred yards on suddenly come in view of an outspanned wagon.

Evidently it is not on the trek, for many things lie scattered around, and a scherm has been made for the Kaffirs.

Under the wagon are the usual Kaffir blankets forming a sleeping place, made use of by the servants who are leisurely cooking their master's dinner. This is the camp of my unwitting host of the Umvukwe, whom I am expecting to meet, and before I have finished my lunch he puts in an appearance.

My new acquaintance proves to be a most agreeable and entertaining man—an old hunter, too. He tells me several stories of lion troubles ended by him in the district, in a quiet, unostentatious way, and also informs me that though the hyæna is a cowardly beast, and really nothing to be at all nervous about at night, yet he may attack a sleeping man if the fire be low, as proved this year by a traveller well known in these parts, who lay down without making a fire, and was wakened by a wolf taking a portion of his hand away in memory of his imprudence. It seems *infra dig.* to lose a portion of one's anatomy to one of

these sneaking scavengers, who, nevertheless, are most powerful brutes.

A great skull, with long horns on its nose, is suspended from a tree close by, and on the wagon are some leviathan bones; of these I have heard whilst in camp, but hardly expected to be so fortunate as to see. The hunter had been commissioned by Mr. Rhodes to shoot a white rhinoceros for the purpose of the Cape Town Museum, the race being already not far from extinct. The peculiar characteristic of the white rhinoceros is that it is *not* white. It differs from the comparatively common, ordinary, or garden rhinoceros inasmuch as it feeds on grass instead of on roots, is larger, and has a blunt, square nose, instead of a pointed one. Neither is it so fierce as the latter. Inside the wagon I am shown the great hide, cut into two or three pieces for convenience in carrying. The horn, that is the larger one, is over thirty-five inches long, and it is clearly seen to be attached to the skull by means of a pad of cartilage only.

The specimen had been shot a few days' journey on the other side of my destination. The bullet from the eight-bore rifle had failed to kill the animal, and it was only after a three days' journey in pursuit, and no fewer than six wounds had been inflicted on

him, that the tenacious hunter came up with him for the last time and gave the poor beast his *coup de grace* as he lay, weak from the loss of blood, under a bush. John, the tiny Hottentot at the camp, had aided in the securing of this mighty prey, bringing him to his knees with a well directed shot. The distance travelled had been fully seventy miles, but it was well worth the trouble, the price to be paid for the specimen being very considerable.

Twenty-seven miles from our last night's dwelling we draw up at a cleared spot where three or four huts are in course of erection, another being apparently in a finished condition. In this I am invited to spend the night before inspecting the Ayrshire mine.

The huts are being mud plastered by sixteen Mashona women, twelve of whom have piccanins on their backs as they work, they being slung, spread-legged, in a cloth on the ample backs of their mothers. The exuberant anatomy of these ladies is probably a providential arrangement for the convenience of their offspring. Inside the huts are four ancient crones, who are engaged in spreading the mud over the poles and filling up the cracks caused by the shrinking of the mud already put on and dried. Another gang carries the mud in small, flat baskets on their heads (piccanins behind, of course), which

the remainder prepare in a hole scraped in the ant-hill close by.

The piccanins wear their heads shaven, all save a small disc at the top. On this small disc, even, no hair is visible, as each half dozen or so of the short hairs are utilised for stringing a row of beads on. The hair on a Kaffir's head is "tussocky," like the grass on the veldt, and each tussock of wool is strung with beads of a variety of colours, and as the beads entirely hide the hair, it appears as if the natural covering of the head had been supplanted by an insignificant and variegated topknot. Some of the full grown women exhibit the same fashion, and to a greater extent, so that as the hair is considerably longer the effect is all the more comical.

I had met several Kaffirs along the road and had tried to purchase a specimen of an assegai having a spud at the end of the shaft for turning the earth over. This is veritably an instance of the sword being made into a ploughshare, though, unfortunately, the ploughshare can be made into a sword with equal facility! The Kaffirs here do not seem to care to part with their only means of protection or offence, and I, not caring to force them, consequently failed.

It has been said that parts of the Lo Magondi district are unpopular with the Kaffirs even yet,

possibly owing to recollections of some having at one time or another been knocked about by miners, some of whom, in the early days, seemed to be incapable of getting boys to work without kicking them. There has doubtless at times been too much of this treatment, but in extenuation it is to be remembered that, as an instance, unless some white man be at the top of the shaft to watch them as they are standing prepared to wind the white man up the shaft and out of danger after he has fired the dynamite fuses preparatory to blasting, it is ten chances to one that they will make doubly sure of their own safety from falling stones by dropping the handle of the windlass when the miner is yet suspended in mid-air, and running a quarter of a mile away. The effect of this on the mind of the miner might well be disquieting, and one can quite understand that the few seconds elapsing before he was blown to shreds would more probably be utilised in objurgating the offenders than in considering means whereby they might be protected from inhuman white men!

This liability to untimely desertion causes my services to be utilised during my visit, for shots are about to be fired in one of the shafts. My guide descends and lights the fuses, then puts his foot in the bucket and shouts to the Kaffirs to wind up, which they do so lazily that I have to use my voice

in earnest. The instant his foot touches the ground they run off as hard as their legs can carry them, without staying to unmount the windlass, as they should have done, in order to preserve the rope from being cut by the projected portions of rock. How far the rascals run I cannot tell, but it is far out of sight, and it is usual for half an hour to be wasted in gathering them together again.

A quarter of a minute later the reports evidence the successful firing of the shots, and fragments of rock are projected far out of the shaft into the air, despite the three feet depth of water which has gathered above the charges. I am assured that had there been no white man to watch them, the Kaffirs might have let my friend fall to the bottom of the shaft to be blown to eternity.

There has in the past been great scarcity of labour here, partly owing to the trouble between early miners and Kaffirs, and also to another fact. We are practically out of the limits of the late Matabele oppression, and the Kaffirs are a very independent lot, often demanding extortionate wages, though what they get is fair and ample. The women who were engaged in "daghering" the huts, struck work when they were paid in "limbo," saying that they would only be satisfied with money, naming an amount which many a man in England rears a

family on, and in return for a very short day's work. Some months back, too, the natives murdered a white policeman and a hut tax-collector, and this was sharply avenged.

We are here about seventeen degrees south of the equator, and within a comparatively short distance of the great Zambesi—indeed, we may be considered to be within the limits of the Zambesi valley, for we have been sharply descending for many miles before arriving. What is known as “the fly” country is within touch now, the nearest point being about five miles away, and it will hence be gathered that further progress for mules or oxen would be barred, and my onward journey, had I desired to proceed, would of necessity have had to be done on foot.

The peculiarity of this mine, one which makes it unique in Africa, almost so in the world, so far as is known, is that the precious metal is contained in a diorite intrusion or dyke, which is ordinarily considered in gold mines an unmitigated nuisance, as it interrupts and disturbs the regular reef, and, moreover, is almost invariably barren. In this case the exception proves the rule, and also of three known examples it is far and away the largest, the two others being situated in America.

I once more experience the sensation of being lowered down the shaft, a hundred feet deep, by a

cranky windlass and four Kaffirs, my foot this time being simply placed in a loop at the end of the rope, the luxury of a bucket not being provided, nor, indeed, does it seem necessary to one after a few experiences. This particular shaft is sunk in the bottom of the largest single excavation made by the ancients that I have seen. Judging roughly, it is probably forty feet in depth and a hundred and twenty across, and represents an enormous amount of work and trouble on the part of the early gold seekers. They are supplanted now by men who use modern and quicker means, and I hear evidences of their presence on every hand, for miles around, in the frequent reports caused by blasting.

The situation of the camp is wild and lovely, but it is to be feared that there is some amount of fever about, though this is so common a condition that the majority of people think comparatively little of it—until they get a particularly bad dose. On the ground in front of the camp are excellent evidences of the richness of the country in game of many varieties, the horns of many antelope resting against the hut walls. Pegged out to dry, also, there are the skins of sable and roan antelope, stretched in the intensely hot sunshine. How I long for time to devote myself to nothing but sport! There appears to be no doubt that if a traveller desire to obtain

any shooting worthy of the name, he must put every other consideration aside, and devote his whole time and energy to it, for any fortune which may befall him otherwise will be mere luck and chance; the solitary koodoo which falls to my rifle being one of the few large buck which I actually see during my wanderings. It is a sore trial to anyone who possesses the sporting instinct to be in the midst of a country where game is abundant, where he may even see them in the distance, and where their tracks often meet his vision, yet to have to feel that the exhilaration of the long and anxious stalk, the careful aim, and perhaps the successful shot are not for him.

Once on my way back I see a large object flitting through the bush, but it is quite indistinguishable, though within a hundred yards. In all probability it is a sable, these being fairly numerous in the district.

Within thirty miles are the wonderful Sinoia caves, so extensive that they are but very little explored. These I have not time to visit, though a comparison with the vast caves in America and the Jenolan caves of New South Wales would have been instructive.

At the Umvukwe we sleep again, but hear no lions this time, the clouds prevalent before having cleared,

rendering it too light for their fancy. A dark, rainy night is the night that the lion loves, and it is then that his awe-inspiring voice may be studied in all its tones and cadences. I ask John, the wee Hottentot, how long it was before my arrival that he had heard the last. Looking stupid for a time and shuffling his delicate hands, he at last says, "Not long;" but on being further pressed, he confesses that he cannot count.

Below the range I stalk some of the large cranes of the country for the purpose of collection, and crawl through an extensive dried up vley. The grass is very long here, and I come upon many a "form" where the buck, &c., had been lying down, or their enemy the lion had been crouching, the grass being crushed flat. Nothing though there is to be seen, I am conscious of a strange feeling of expectancy, for the long grass may hide anything, and one has the impression that at any moment one may be confronted with game almost within arm's length.





THE CAVE OF THE LION

CHAPTER VII.

PRIMITIVE ART.—THE MISADVENTURES OF A WAGON.

SALISBURY being reached without further event, I take a long walk out to Six Mile Spruit, on the Gwelo road, where there are some of the puzzling drawings upon stone popularly though probably incorrectly known as "Bushman's drawings." The bushman of this day appears to have not the slightest rudimentary idea of drawing, while these are executed with a fair amount of skill. They are similar to specimens which exist in the colony, and at Sinoia, farther north, and so far no trace of their origin has been discovered. Those at Six Mile Spruit are drawn on the flat face of a large boulder, about eight feet high, lodged in a roomy horizontal cavity in the rocks of a small kopje situated near a river in somewhat broken country. On it are depicted the scene of an elephant hunt, where the crafty hunter (black) is creeping behind the huge animal to hamstring him, besides representations of sable

antelope, buffalo, a snake, bird, and others, including many human figures.

The medium seems to be a pigment of red earth, but the face of the stone is exposed to the united destructiveness of sun, rain, wind, and frost, so there must be some peculiar quality in the pigment to enable it to resist the wearing influences of perhaps hundreds of years of exposure. The kopjes, consisting as they do simply of a number of large boulders jumbled together, are naturally threaded with extensive crevices, and in one case a large, but low-roofed, chamber is formed. This peculiarity has led to the kopjes being utilised as dwellings, and the situation of the picture stone has caused it doubtless to be used for keeping a look out from its side of the kopje. The wall of the cavity in which the picture stone is lodged, some fourteen feet above the ground, curves back from the roof to the floor, so that a considerable space exists behind the stone, affording concealment, and the walls here are also decorated, though by no means so thoroughly, nor with such pains. The top and side of the stone, where it is accessible, are polished in a way which suggests the continual rubbing of feet by persons accustomed to climb and sit there, though this fact comically reminds one of the similar effect to be seen in Australia, particularly at the Jenolan Caves

in New South Wales, where the beautiful polish of the hard stone is due to the passage of generations of "rock wallabies" over the rocks. From the primitive character of the rock dwelling one might almost judge the artists to have been a tribe of artistic and educated monkeys !

At the canteen close by I see the skull of a lion, which carries a story with it, which was within an ace of being a tragic one. A young Africander in the neighbourhood of the Umfuli river, hearing that a lion had been seen in the vicinity, was all eagerness, as many newcomers, possessed of perhaps more pluck than discretion are, to kill his first lion. Finding his quarry without much difficulty, he fired and wounded the beast, breaking its shoulder. This naturally annoyed it, and, springing like a lightning flash upon him, it first tore the flesh off his shoulder and back with one stroke of its great claws, and, seizing the unfortunate man's face in its jaws, nearly bit one side of his face off. Strangely enough (whether overcome for the instant by the pain or not, it is difficult to say) the great animal then retired a few paces, which the plucky man, though so terribly wounded, took advantage of to insert another cartridge into his rifle and shoot his antagonist through the heart. Months of hospital life, from which he had just emerged when I saw

him, and a shattered constitution were the results of this adventure, and corroborate the dictum of many an old hunter, that unless the tyro, who is alone, can be absolutely dead certain that his shot will kill, or if he have a companion who cannot be implicitly trusted, it is better to leave the lion to his own devices, unless these happen to include an attack on *him* ! The skull is the finest I have seen, and has been sold for the large sum of six pounds ! The lioness whose skull accompanies it was shot by the innkeeper, close by, about eight months ago.

It might have been thought that four or five years of civilisation such as that of Salisbury would have deterred lions from approaching the town, but it is not so long ago that one was killed actually within its confines ; or, rather, in the immediate outskirts. A man saw a large animal with its head lowered, but half hidden by the carcase of an ox, about a hundred yards away. Thinking it was only a dog or hyæna, he carelessly approached it, and was angrily faced by a full-grown lion, when but a few yards off. His extreme danger was seen by his little son, who, with rare courage and presence of mind, quickly brought his father's rifle to bear, and shot the lion dead on the spot.

During my stay, even, the spoor of a lion is reported on the banks of a spruit, about two miles away.

Let me give one impressive illustration of the uncertainty of travelling, and the impossibility of making definite plans with any likelihood of their being carried to a successful conclusion. Desiring to go to Hartley, and failing to obtain a horse, partly on account of the proximity of the "fly," I hear that a wild Irishman is taking his wagon out there, and decide to take advantage of the fact. At the time appointed for starting he is nowhere to be found, and as I hear that he is bound to call at a store at the Kopje before actually leaving town, I settle down there, feeling sure that it is only a matter of an hour or two. I also come across an old acquaintance, who has not been in town lately, and is therefore busily engaged in getting thoroughly intoxicated.

All day passes, and although the wagon has been loaded up and taken to the outspan outside the town, no Pat appears, and I make up my mind to turn in. Before doing so my inebriate friend is picked up out of the gutter, and, although a complete stranger, is put to bed by my host in his own room; but as we enter he staggers out and lies under the gum trees, where we leave him for the night, well covered with blankets. Pat turns up in a very talkative and mischievous mood, trying to persuade us with Irish volubility to put lighted candles round the recumbent

form, bring out the whisky, and give it a "real good Irish wake."

The unexpected it is that happens, for it is my friend, to whom I had been indebted for much kindness at one stage of my journey, who "wakes" *us* by stumbling into our room, almost sober, at the unearthly hour of 3 a.m.

At 11 a.m. we proceed to the outspan, Pat having vanished again, and find the wagon about a mile out of town on the veldt, large as life, though the previous evening I searched in vain for it in the deep darkness. Pat of course does not turn up, but we proceed. I lie lazily on the sacks of mealies during the first hour, half asleep and untroubled by the jolting, but three miles out we stop, and after an infinity of shouting and whipping we are reluctantly forced to the conclusion that we have stuck in the soft ground and cannot move.

The team of oxen is far too small for the weight we are carrying, and they are also very badly trained, only pulling by twos and never together. In the end we have to take the forty-three sacks of meal, each weighing two hundred pounds, off the wagon and re-load them when the struggling oxen have succeeded in pulling the wagon out. By six in the evening we have started again. There is no moon, but we travel gaily for another half mile, only to

stick again hopelessly. No efforts succeed in extricating us this time, and we give it up for the night.

I pass the night sleeping under the wagon, others in the tent which occupies the rear of the wagon. In the morning we try once more to persuade our oxen to extricate us from our unpleasant position, but it is obviously beyond the strength of the poor brutes, who strain and jerk under the cruel lash, bending their heads to the ground with the violence of their exertions and swaying uselessly from side to side.

Our driver comes to the conclusion that he must return in order to get another span of oxen, and actually meets Pat on the road, the latter having reluctantly torn himself away from the allurements of the gay city. But even then we do not see him, for he returns with his driver, and hour after hour passes without a sign of our fresh team. We take our guns and beat up the country for game, but to no effect; then we do some good practice at revolver shooting, and finally settle down to cook our dinner. A frying pan enables us to cook a piece of fresh beefsteak; a Kaffir pot first serves to bake some excellent bread in, the pot being covered with the hot ashes of the wood and cowdung fire, and then to make a delicious stew, with the luxuries of

fresh vegetables and potatoes, all of which makes it evident that life on the veldt need not be *all* roughness and hardship. How lazily these days pass! Spite of the fact that now time presses me, I have attained the happy, and in South Africa to some extent *necessary*, state of mind in which one calmly abandons oneself to the course of events, thinking nothing of delay or untoward accidents, caring little how much time passes over one's head, recognising no meaning in the word hurry—for hurry spells failure—and generally cultivating that phlegmatic temperament which is the characteristic of those people who have lived longest in the wildness of the South African continent—the Boers.

We sit round our camp fire that night smoking the rough tobacco grown in the country (for even that of the Transvaal is unobtainable in camp at present), and spinning yarns about experiences in other parts of the world. Very dark it is, for the moon does not favour us, and we can see nothing beyond a yard or two of ground illumined by the dancing flame of our fire. Sometimes a set of teeth appears behind one or other of us, but it is only that of the boy, of whom nothing else is visible! This peculiarity of the Kaffir always reminds one of the "Cheshire Cat" of "Alice in Wonderland." The jackals bark all around us, and we begin to think of turning in

for the night, when the distant cry of a bullock driver in the direction of the Poort signals to us that the oxen are approaching. The wait before they reach us seems interminable, for, verily, the ox is slow, and when at last we hear the scuffle of their feet close by, all we can see is a number of huge horns almost upon us. The oxen being the colour of the Kaffir, only these are visible.

Still no Pat, so we turn in between the wheels of the wagon, and next morning he rides calmly up asking if anyone wants to run into camp to get their English mail, as they may ride his horse back and return on foot. Time has been wasted, and I am reluctantly forced to the conclusion that I had better avail myself of the offer and return to Salisbury, as otherwise I shall miss the coach down country. Driving out later to fetch my baggage from the wagon, I find it still in the same place, but actually preparing to start.

As I gather my baggage together we notice a little party approaching us from the direction of Hartley, consisting of a dozen Kaffirs carrying somewhat heavy burdens and a single white man drooping over the donkey he is riding. It turns out to be a poor fever-stricken traveller who has come from two or three days' journey on the other side of Hartley. He had there shot a rhinoceros, which he is

bringing into camp, and had contracted a severe attack of fever, walking thirty miles a day into Hartley in spite of it. By the time he reaches us it is evident that he can hardly hold himself on the donkey he is riding, and I gladly make room for him in my sulky.

Intending to return to the Transvaal by way of Manicaland, Beira, and Durban, I am considerably disappointed to find that the boats are running very irregularly owing to changes in the service, and this entirely precludes me from returning that way. Hartley is a district around which a very large amount of prospecting has been done, but great difficulties have been met with on account of the presence of the "fly," preventing traction, except by means of Kaffirs, and also, in places, of the presence of large quantities of water below a certain depth. This country was on the borderland of the Matabele kingdom, and Lobengula even progressed so far as to erect a battery there, which never was started, and probably remains there yet if the white ants and borers have let it alone.

Manicaland is more favourably situated, being free from fly, and on the direct line from the coast to Salisbury, so that the advantage of railway communication must soon aid materially in its development. The scenery is in great part of a very fine

description, broken, mountainous, and well wooded, and in many places water-power should be abundant. Umtali is the centre, and is situated near the edge of the Mashonaland plateau, about a hundred and fifty miles from Salisbury, and midway between the latter town and Chimoio, the terminus of the Beira railway. This marks the fringe of the fly belt, that great bar to progress which modern science has well-nigh conquered.

I find an extensive sale of goods in progress on my arrival in camp, and am interested in noting some of the prices realised. A ramshackly old Cape cart, costing at most sixty pounds new at Cape Town, fetches a hundred and sixty here, while a team of mules is sold at prices varying from forty to fifty pounds apiece. A most miserable, weedy horse, if guaranteed "salted," will command anything from forty to sixty pounds, while one of better class—and a few really smart ones are to be seen—will certainly not cost less than a hundred.

There are many chameleons to be found in the country, and I find a large one on a banana plant in the garden. He and a smaller one perform the most wonderful gymnastic feats on a stretched string, attempting to balance themselves on its top, which of course is impossible; consequently they swing round and round, backwards and forwards,

with hands and arms outstretched in an insane fashion. As a rule the chameleon is a most deliberate animal, and will think a hundred times before he commits himself to any definite course of action, and it is therefore remarkable to witness the extreme celerity with which the smaller one recedes before the approach of the larger one, moving his tiny eyes, fixed at the apex of a revolving cone, wildly in every direction. Unable to retreat farther, his colour turns from a greenish-yellow to a blue-black, and he shams dead.

Meeting at the club an eminent divine who has just arrived from Bulawayo, he tells me that this side of Charter his conveyance was threatened by a lion as they were in the act of changing teams one evening. Walking in a slanting direction across their path and nearing them, he stood still in the moonlight thirty or forty yards away, the party at first thinking him to be a mule; they soon realised his identity on his sitting down on his haunches and calmly inspecting them. A revolver was the solitary firearm that could be mustered amongst the whole party, and the report of this, the cracking of whips, and the vocal efforts of the clerical passengers, apparently decided the animal to turn aside and depart.

On the Umtali road also the coach was recently

“stuck-up” by lions, losing an ox, so that there is no doubt as to the reality of the nuisance, even where there is continual traffic. Hearing me express disappointment that I have not seen one, an old Mashonalander remarks, “You need not be sorry, if you hear them round your camp at night you will pretty soon wish you could consign them to Hades!” Little did I think that my wish would be gratified within a week, and that my one, solitary, tame adventure would have at last occurred!

I take my way onward to Gwelo once more, and on this journey suffer more from the dust than at any previous time, for the wind being with us, blows the clouds of fine powdery sand into the coach, and for three days we sit in such an atmosphere that we cannot see the rear of the first span of oxen, immediately in front of us. Little wonder that our chests are sore and irritated beyond measure long before we arrive, tired out, at Gwelo.

We find the community here in a state of excitement over the enrolment of a detachment of the Rhodesia Horse, which, under another name, later, guarded the little township against the revolted Matabele, whose kraals (the Insukamini and Movein) are within a few miles to the west and north-west. Still, no hint of revolt is in the air as I wander over the country side, gun in hand, adding

to my ornithological collection, and few natives are to be seen, save those engaged about the camp as servants, and in building operations.

A couple of miles away is the long kopje, which I often make the scene of my wanderings, examining the remains of ancient fortifications and the evidences of old time mining, and watching the many varieties of birds and insects. The small parakeet flashes from tree to tree as I stroll up the steep sides of the kopje, the ground of which, as I ascend, resembles a vast cart-load of stone bricks thrown carelessly down. Spider webs here and there bar my way, their constructors being hexagonal creatures, three-sixteenths or a quarter of an inch across, whose frosted colours vary from a bronze to peacock blue.

A Kaffir is carelessly chopping wood a hundred and fifty yards below, and my advance is quiet up to a place where a long heap of stones runs diagonally across my path about ten paces away. Here I am put on the *qui vive* by a low, short growl, which, not knowing the ways of hyænas when surprised, I put down to one that has been haunting the camp for three nights past. Thinking that I may be able to put a charge of shot into it, I walk forward to gain the top of the heap, which, though low, is sufficient to hide anything which may be on

the other side. I am startled by another growl, so loud and fierce that it cannot be mistaken, and as I gain the top I see, cantering easily away up the hill, a full grown, tawny lion, even now not fifty yards away from me. In an instant he disappears behind a clump of bushes, once casting a look behind, and though for two hundred yards I carefully follow on his spoor, only visible here and there where he had trodden on soft earth between the stones, his path leads into some long grass at the top of the kopje, into which it would have been madness to venture. Examination shows that at the time when I first heard his growl I must have been within twenty paces of him without knowing it.

Some time before my first visit, a Kaffir working at a shaft on the kopje had been frightened out of his wits by the discovery that a lion was watching him from an opposite spur of the hill, a couple of hundred yards away; and since my departure the spoor of a lion has been seen on the tennis ground close to the town, warning ladies and gentlemen who play a set before breakfast that they are liable to interruption, and had better take rifles with their racquets!

I continue my walk along the kopje top, succeeding in obtaining specimens of the "Go away" bird and the "Confounded Fool" (not the *exact* adjective, it may be said). This bird unmis-

takably asks "Where?" in a loud voice—the two therefore supplying question and answer.

Then descending the precipitous end of the kopje, I find myself entangled in a maze of thorn, and, pushing my way through, break into an oval clearing with two enormous spreading trees, similar to those seen on the Limpopo, overshadowing it. The night is falling, and, with my recent experience fresh in my mind, I realise forcibly the utter loneliness, and start on my way home. Passing a pool covered luxuriantly with water lilies, I remember that it is here that a crocodile, whose hide I have seen in camp, was shot, and that others are known to exist; and as I clear away from the trees and reach the open veldt, a buck dashes away into the fast deepening gloom.

It is late before we turn in, a smoking concert being the attraction, and on repairing to our huts we find the cattle tethered outside my own in a state of uneasiness, and straining at their tethers. The horses, too, are neighing, the whole camp being in a commotion. The reason is not far to seek, for listening in the still silence of the perfect night, the hunting grunts of a party of lions are heard by us as they march round the camp. After a time they appear to sheer off, and the animals quieten down, but in the morning a number of donkeys are found to have stampeded and four oxen are missing, clearly

showing that lions were present during the night. Further evidence of this is given next day, when an incomer reports that he has passed a party of three about ten miles away.

Once again the kopje tempts me, when a small party is formed to explore some old workings which have recently been discovered. For a space fully three hundred yards long and a hundred or so across, the whole surface is covered with excavations, more or less deep. The spot where the newly opened up drive was found is pointed out to me, and I approach it rather incautiously, being hastily restrained by my guide, who warns me that the ledge above the hole, in which is the entrance (through which we have to crawl on our stomachs), is the home of a couple of "mambas"—the quickest and most deadly snake of South Africa. Of this there are two or three varieties, attaining a great length, and I have heard it said that in speed it almost rivals a horse for a short distance.

We therefore approach very carefully, and are relieved to find no snakes at home. We arm ourselves with sticks, however, inasmuch as they may have slipped into the mouth of the drive, and our guide, lying flat on his stomach, works his way through the opening, which is only just large enough for him to squeeze through. The descent is steep,

and below a large series of chambers present themselves, it being at once apparent that they are due to human agency on account of the pick marks on the face of the rocky sides. The roof has in many places fallen in, and though I crawl full length for thirty feet or so along a crevice, when the passage becomes finally blocked after about fifty-five yards of descent, I can yet perceive space and hear the sound of multitudes of bats farther ahead, past the fall of rock which blocks the way. It is evident, therefore, that mining operations have been very extensive here, and the works are instructive, inasmuch as they present a typical sample of a *bonâ fide* drive, which is not very often found in ancient workings.

I find tokens of occupation of the cave at a distant date by animals, in the shape of bones, some being apparently those of a lion and others those of some large antelope; the teeth of the latter are perishing, which would indicate considerable age, though the cave is intensely dry. In another remote corner a fragment of pottery is found with a very crude ornamentation under the lip, otherwise the pot is similar to those in use among the natives to-day, and may have been the property of refugees from the Matabele who had taken advantage of the drive as a hiding-place, though the extent to which the

mouth had caved in would make it appear that a very long time had elapsed.

The inhabitants of the chambers and gallery now are large numbers of bats and the brown coney (or rock rabbit), similar to a large guinea pig, whose forms we occasionally see flitting across the rocks by the feeble light of our candles. The air is perfectly fresh, and would lead one to suppose that there must be some other means of ventilation than the small hole we have entered by, probably on the other side of the fall of rock which bars our progress.

One evening the township is surprised by the arrival of Dr. Jameson, in whose administrative abilities Rhodesians had strong belief, and the loss of whose services in the internal administration of the country, whatever its cause, they sincerely, and with good reason, deplore.

Once more we follow the line taken by the victorious army on their way to Bulawayo, and, as we lunch at Shangani, have a chat at Eagle Reef store, and renew acquaintance with the kind-hearted hosts at the Bembisi, we little dream that the murderous Matabele would in so short a time wreak a cowardly vengeance on the lonely storekeepers.

Of Bulawayo little more need be said, but that little should speak volumes for its future. Even in

the few months which have elapsed since my departure the town has developed amazingly, many fine brick buildings having arisen and many additions made to social, financial, and commercial circles.

The long journey through the Matoppos hills along



SALISBURY: "THE BITER BIT"

the Tuli road to Gwanda is made with Captain Brand, who, with his small party, later makes the same road famous by his gallant fight against almost overwhelming odds of rebel Matabele. Of this war-like race two fine young men, with hemispheres of

gaily coloured feathers coquettishly tilted on one side of the head, at one place moodily watch the coach as it passes, and dream, perchance, of the time which is to come when they shall wash their spears in the blood of the hated "mulungu."

Pretoria had seen my departure as a clean shaven, respectable person, decently clad and appointed, while now, when the coach has deposited me in the square, and has bowled away to the stables, an old friend walks across from the hotel, and, looking me full in the face, asks, without exhibiting a scrap of personal interest, "Do you know when the Bulawayo coach will come in?" Perceiving the look of non-recognition, I determine to give one more example to the Uitlander of the churlish dislike of the Englishman which is ingrained in the Boer character, and, deliberately turning my back, sullenly mutter the standard Boer expression, "Verdomder Engelschman!" This is quite sufficient to arouse the ire of any freeborn Briton, and I am about to be made aware that there are some grievances which the Uitlander will *not* stand at the hand of the burgher, when I see that the disguise of unkempt beard, worn and travel stained clothing, and dust-covered physiognomy has at length been penetrated.

So ends a journey through one of Britain's latest Colonial conquests—a Colony which, in its infancy,

evidences a strong and healthy existence under circumstances exceptionally difficult and calculated to retard progress. Founded with the consent of the Imperial Government, though regarded by it for a long period as a territory involving little or no Imperial responsibility, at least so far as its defence was concerned, it justified its right to exist, firstly, as an independently governed Colony by steadily developing and proving its resources while overcoming enormous obstacles, and, secondly, as a civilising agency, by bringing the Kaffir tribes under a just and civilised rule, and by the destruction of a bloodthirsty *régime*, the code of which was murder, rapine, and enslavement.

Under the system, new to South Africa, of government by a commercial body, the wave of civilisation and of modern progress has been carried past the Transvaal, where it breaks, ultimately, in some form, to conquer, far into the interior of the great Continent, making light that which for ages has been dark, adding to the riches of the world, and rendering to the mother country a good account of all that her sons are yet capable of achieving in opening up new worlds to her commerce, in finding needed outlets for her ever increasing surplus population, and in extending the blessings of western civilisation.

Many have condemned the acts of a few which led to international complications caused by the invasion of the Transvaal, but it should be remembered that the few, however exalted their position, and however intimate their connection with the affairs of the Chartered Company, did not constitute that Company, and that the actions of individuals connected with it could not in justice be laid at the door of the scores of non-resident shareholders, innocent of complicity or knowledge, and constituting the bulk of the Company, whose interests would be prejudiced by any serious interference with the commercial rights conferred by the Charter. Though the power that grants special and valuable privileges has inherently the right to withdraw these, before such a step were taken proper and conclusive evidence would necessarily have to be adduced to show that the invasion of the Transvaal was an act of the Company itself, presumably designed for its benefit, and not one of individuals connected with it, but holding other and outside interests, whose influential position might enable them to temporarily utilise a portion of the Company's organisation. In any case, the shareholders must accept the result of an independent and authoritative inquiry.

Speaking of the future of Rhodesia, I may say

that its success affects all the three divisions of the white inhabitants of South Africa—Boers, Afrianders and Englishmen. The first-named have already gained greatly by the amount of traffic to Rhodesia, necessitating the employment of vast numbers of their wagons and creating an extended market for their oxen and produce, while many whose inheritance of their fathers' restless spirit has prompted them to wander have taken advantage of the opening up and pacification of the country, which places valuable farm lands at their disposal. Afrianders and Englishmen, for the other part, vie with each other in developing the country's resources in every direction, and so far, in Rhodesia, though the Boer element is the least numerous, all three classes have worked together peacefully to the mutual benefit of themselves and the community.

These facts present the strongest possible argument for the accomplishment of a confederation of the South African States and Colonies—a dream long indulged in by the few, and at one period apparently much nearer attainment than it may be at the present time. It is a proposition of which President Kruger, even when the bitterness of recent conflict was dominant, expressed approval and a readiness to consider, and its full fruition would do for South Africa in its degree what the confederation

of the German States did for Germany. There exists absolutely no condition which should render such a consummation impossible, and on the Dutch side it is safeguarded firstly by the fact that the farmers of Cape Colony, the vast majority of whom are of the same original stock as the Transvaal Boers, live contentedly under their own domestic rule, yet under the Imperial ægis of Great Britain; and again by the world-known freedom in the conduct of internal affairs which the mother country permits and fosters in all her offshoots.

To achieve such a desirable issue generous concessions must necessarily be made by and to those States which are already independent, but all are concerned in the evolution of a South African nation, and they must recollect that had the Dutch founders of New York State desired to keep the government of a large section of North America in the hands of a few of the early pioneers and their direct descendants, to the complete exclusion of all who came afterwards, America would not have been America to-day. Is the great Republic any the less a nation, any the less independent, that the early days of her rapid growth were spent as a colony of Great Britain?

Generosity—necessarily safeguarding all national interests—exercised at all times and under all con-

difficulties by the Boers would inspire confidence and generosity in return. They would mean the advantage of valuable peace would be assured and remembering always that ' *Landtag Maak Mag* ' a movement on their part in favour of the principle of confederation would appeal with enormous force to an overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of South Africa thus creating a powerful nation whose expression of opinion on any question concerning themselves must needs carry a weight which would be infinitely greater than any which is possible now, and which would involve the guarantee that their deliberations and conclusions should, in all that pertains to internal welfare, be respected by the Imperial Government.

It is credible that such an event was drawing within the bounds of probability; and the education of the Boers which is going on would lend itself to this end, but everyone must admit that such events as the " Raid " must cause bitterness, and tend to postpone the realisation of the high ideal of confederation. At the same time, a recurrence of such an event is now sufficiently guarded against, and in itself it presents another strong argument in favour of unity, for invasion or interference would then be rendered impossible.

A " United South Africa " is a cry of which the

last has not yet been heard, and however German and Hollander may strive against its realisation, or temporary checks may delay it, the day will surely come when opposing interests will be reconciled, ancient feuds be buried, and the bitterness of the past will be forgotten in a common zeal for the building up of a "United States of South Africa."



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